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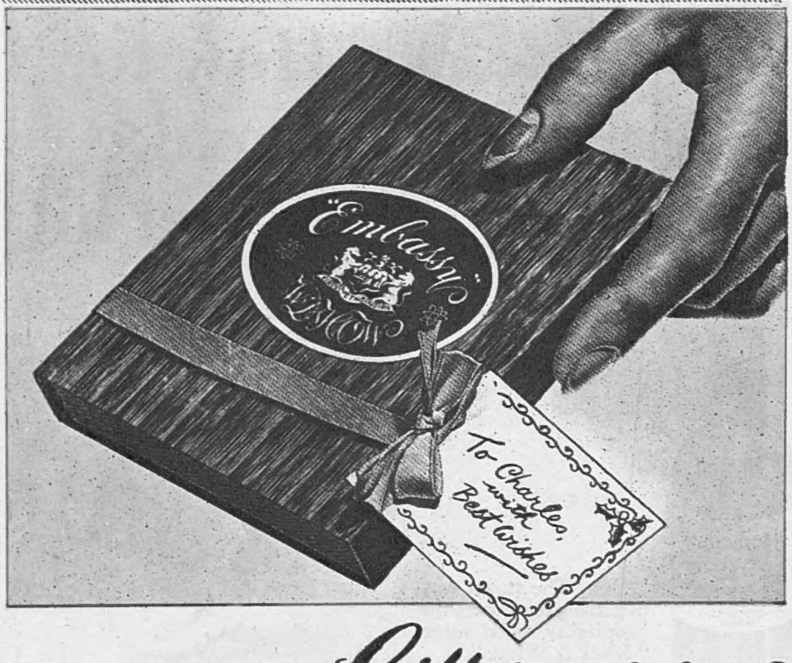

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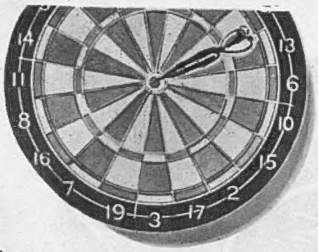

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The Sketch
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1951

AT SANDRINGHAM FOR CHRISTMAS

The King, happily so much improved in health, plans to spend Christmas with the Royal family at Sandringham, where this photograph was taken just before his illness. From there his Majesty will deliver his customary Christmas broadcast to his people.

The Christmas-card idea of Christmas morning—is also Dickens's way of painting it. On pages 610-611 we show other scenes from *Scrooge*, the film version of *A Christmas Carol*. Here, a reformed Scrooge carries the crippled Tiny Tim on his shoulder, past the poulterer's shop to the Cratchit home.

Our Motley Notes

By Toby O'Brien

SEÑOR SALVADOR DALI, who has erupted into London at the moment of writing, is a truly remarkable character. He is also a great source of distress to the type of person who reads that Left-wing weekly which has been unkindly called "All my eye and Kingsley Martin." As a Surrealist he ought, according to the rules, to join Peace Councils; to sign letters to *The Times* beginning: "We, the undersigned, members of all parties or of none"; to believe that the murderous collection of thugs which was the Spanish Government at the outbreak of the Civil War was "liberal and democratic"; and to have nice ideas about Mr. Aneurin Bevan. Alas, Dali is a Right Winger, a monarchist, and lives contentedly in Spain on the Costa Brava. He is, of course, a master of publicity, but this should not be allowed to conceal the fact that, at the same time, he is a very remarkable artist. At the height of his Surrealism, he was asked why he painted his wife with mutton chops on her shoulder. His reply was devastatingly logical: "I love my wife. I love mutton chops."

THE "avant garde" of to-day constitute to-morrow's artistic "old fogies." Readers may remember the delightfully "period" Surrealist exhibition that was held in London about 1936. Every type of fantastic object was on view. One, I remember, consisted of four yellow buttons sewn on to a piece of grey canvas, ascending vertically, with three others at an angle of 45 degrees from them. This object had some such title as *Springtime on the Arno*. It was very highly priced. Mr. William Walton surreptitiously and naughtily pinned a kipper on another object. The enthusiasts for *l'art nouveau* worshipped it with uncritical delight for quite a time.

POSIES of this sort have always had their success since the "Greenery-allery" days. Incidentally, can anybody tell me the original of the famous story of the æsthete who was seen walking down the street with a live lobster on the end of a gold chain, and when asked why he did it, he replied: "Ah! It knows the secrets of the deep, and does not bark!"?

In my time at Oxford I heard it told of Mr. Harold Acton, a notable figure of the post-Waugh generation, but I have also heard it told of Sartre, Jean Cocteau and Oscar Wilde. It would be amusing to trace the story of its true source.

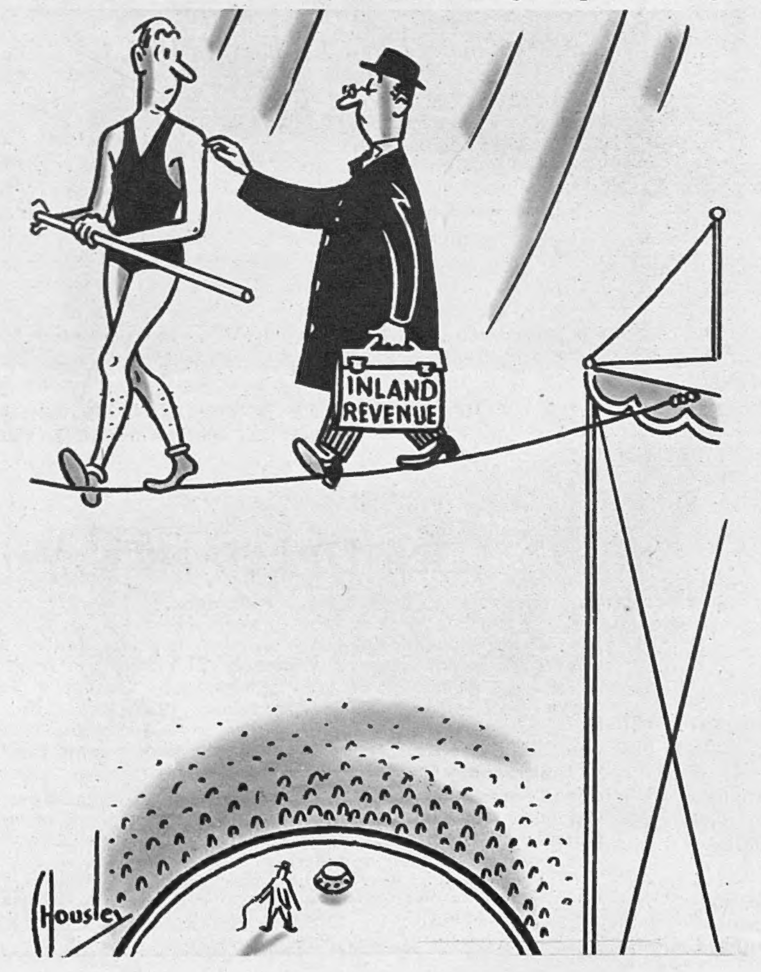
Reverting to posies, I must confess that I find intellectual snobs almost unbearable. There is a very real joy in debunking them. I always like the story of Mr. Hilaire Belloc when some ecstatic woman went up to him and said: "Oh, Mr. Belloc, what is the 'mystique,' what is the driving force that makes you want to write such wonderful works?"; to which Hilaire Belloc replied: "Madam, I write in order to be rich and esteemed"; and was it not Dr. Johnson who said: "Sir, nobody but a fool writes except for profit"? I remember the first time I ever heard the late Philip Guedalla speak. It was in Oxford, in the heyday of Mr. D. H. Lawrence's lubricous popularity. Philip was extremely unkind about this popular hero of Bloomsbury and the Left. When question time came, an ecstatic female undergraduate leapt to her feet and said: "Surely even Mr. Guedalla will admit that Mr. D. H. Lawrence has enlarged the whole scope of the modern novel." "Yes," said Philip, "I suppose you could say that in the sense that you would talk of enlarging the whole scope of a house by taking the lavatory door off its hinges."

A WHOLLY admirable and down-to-earth charity is the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals, with which "Bertie" Bridges Webb, the chairman, is this year celebrating a twenty-five-years connection. Until a year or two ago, when one of my young arrived back from school with a badge in his buttonhole which entitled him, apparently, to call himself a "Busy Bee," I had never heard of the P.D.S.A. It is,

however, the largest international animal charity in the world, and, from what I have seen of it, is quite admirably run. "Bertie" Bridges Webb is a most extraordinary person. I have three or four friends—"Tommy" Thompson, about whom I wrote a fortnight ago, is one; Lawrence Venn is another, and Sir Desmond Morton is a third—whom one can know for many years, and apparently never come to the end of their many-sidedness and diversity of experience. "Bertie" is not merely a highly successful business man and the chairman of the P.D.S.A., but is, among other things, one of the greatest living authorities on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century clocks in this country. In addition, he was the man who, during the slump, produced the 10-ton Christmas pudding for distribution to needy families, obtaining the ingredients from the Empire, and thus doing a great deal to alter the whole pattern of the Christmas trade. He is an expert on wireless, his experience of that science going back to the days before broadcasting, a brilliant organiser, and one of the most widely travelled people I know. As a companion he is a delight. A little while before Philip Jordan died, Philip and I were discussing "Bertie," and we agreed that the disconcerting thing about him was that you could never meet him without his telling you of some fantastic experience which you mentally decided must be phoney—and then, to your exasperation, you would find that it was, in fact, an understatement of the truth.

A FRIEND asked me the other day if I could advise him as to where to obtain information with regard to his outdoor vine, and whether it would be possible to make wine from it. One of my more bizarre friends, who insists that he shall be nameless, and who is one of the most remarkable Civil Servants I have met, is also a most notable horticulturist. In places where those who are interested in flowering shrubs gather, his immense distinction obtained in the service of the State counts for nothing. His experiments in crossing a Japanese with a fruiting cherry, on the other hand, cause these gentry to touch the ground with their foreheads. Some years ago, he saw a vine growing over the front of the house of a mutual friend, who asked him to prune it. This friend told him that the original vine came from Johannesberg stock. My friend duly pruned it, and the next year there was a fantastic crop of grapes. At the same time he took cuttings, planted them in his garden and enquired from the experts as to the possibility of making his own wine. They informed him that there was no reason at all why vines grown in Kent, from a fine European stock, should not be successful.

Throughout the Middle Ages, Kent, Sussex and the Isle of Wight were the great wine-growing districts of Britain, and it is, I believe, only the accident of the fact that the vintners remained loyal to the old religion, so that Henry VIII. ordered their vineyards to be grubbed up and handed over to the brewers for hop-gardens, which caused vine-growing in south-east England to disappear. My friend's experience has been that in any ten-years cycle he gets one superlative, two good and two moderate vintages. In the remaining five years, the stuff is vinegary and undrinkable. I gather, however, that there is one obstacle in the path of anyone who is thinking of growing their own "Côte de Maidstone" or "Grand Cru de Shanklin," and that is that you must not plant more than a square rod, pole or perch, otherwise His Majesty's Customs and Excise will come down on you.



TALKING of the old religion, I was told a pleasant story the other day, of the gentleman who became a Catholic, having been a Protestant, became a priest, became a Protestant again, became a parson, left the Church of England to become a Catholic again, and wanted once more to resume his duties as a priest. The late Cardinal Hinsley—that charming and saintly man—wrote him a kind and gentle letter explaining why this was not possible, adding in his own hand: "P.S.—My dear man, you are making God dizzy"!

MY recent note on the old gentleman who had had a little trouble in the Park, and then was reminded of it when he pinched somebody's umbrella in the Travellers' Club, has caused a mutual friend to recall a classic remark made in the early 'thirties by Brian Davidson—then a lawyer, and now a director and pillar of a well-known aeroplane company. One old gentleman was always getting into trouble. His last escapade concerned a young lady who was so incautious as to get into the same carriage with him in a train which was just about to go through the Merstham tunnel. After a short, sharp tussle, the lady managed to pull the communication-cord, the old gentleman was duly arrested, convicted—and fined fifty shillings. I remember enquiring how it was that after such an impressive record he should escape with so light a penalty. "Well, you see," said Brian, "he was only convicted of 'tickle'; and whereas 'slap' is a Common Law assault, 'tickle' is only an offence against the by-laws of the Southern Railway—maximum penalty fifty shillings." I remember that this was, in fact, so in law, but no doubt the dead hand of nationalisation has removed this pleasant anomaly.

IN the last week I have been lucky in having two of the best dinners I have enjoyed, not merely since the war, but, I think, in my experience. One was that given by Victor Bridgen in a private room at Brown's Hotel, where the chef had indeed excelled himself. The other was shooting with Alex Abel-Smith in Hertfordshire. Both were dinners to remember for a lifetime. Incidentally, at the Victor Bridgen dinner I was a little dubious when I saw that the Hock, a Niersteinor, was a '49, and therefore only two years old. I need not have worried. For bouquet and vinosity it was clear that this wine was not only remarkably mature, but, like the other '49 Hocks, will rival the great years '37, '34 and even that *annus mirabilis* 1921. Also at the Bridgen dinner I heard a nice crack delivered by a very distinguished gentleman. He asked permission to say a few words, spoke about the raw materials position, mentioned the Ministry of Supply, and then added in the most solemn tones: "We face grave times—times of an appalling gravity—indeed, the sandys are running in."

I HAD a letter the other day from Paris from a Rumanian friend of pre-war and early wartime days, who, having been a fighter pilot, managed to seize a four-engined bomber, having shot the Red guards, and fly it to Turkey. He was a member of a Rumanian delegation that came here in 1939. Two admirable colleagues of his, who did a splendid job for us during the war, christened themselves *Stéfan le fin* and *Georges le brutal*. I was explaining to them that Lord Lloyd, then the Chairman of the British Council, who became a fully qualified fighter-bomber pilot in his sixtieth year, was going to fly his own 'plane over to Halton and meet us there. Whether it was that my French was inadequate, I do not know. Suffice it that they looked extremely dubious. Finally, I got them to tell me what it was that was worrying them. It transpired that they thought that Lord Lloyd was going to pilot our 'plane. "*Mon cher,*" said *Stéfan le fin*, "*pour moi, j'aurais préféré un pilot moins noble.*" Lord Lloyd was delighted with this story when I told it to him, and dined out on it for weeks.

Toby O'Brien

By London traffic lights Salvador Dali was snapshotted. Note his mustachios—those sensitive antennæ via which, he says, he captures ideas.

LA GRANDE MADONE DE PORT LLIGAT. Painted after his recent visit to the Pope. Mme. Dali was the model for the Madonna.

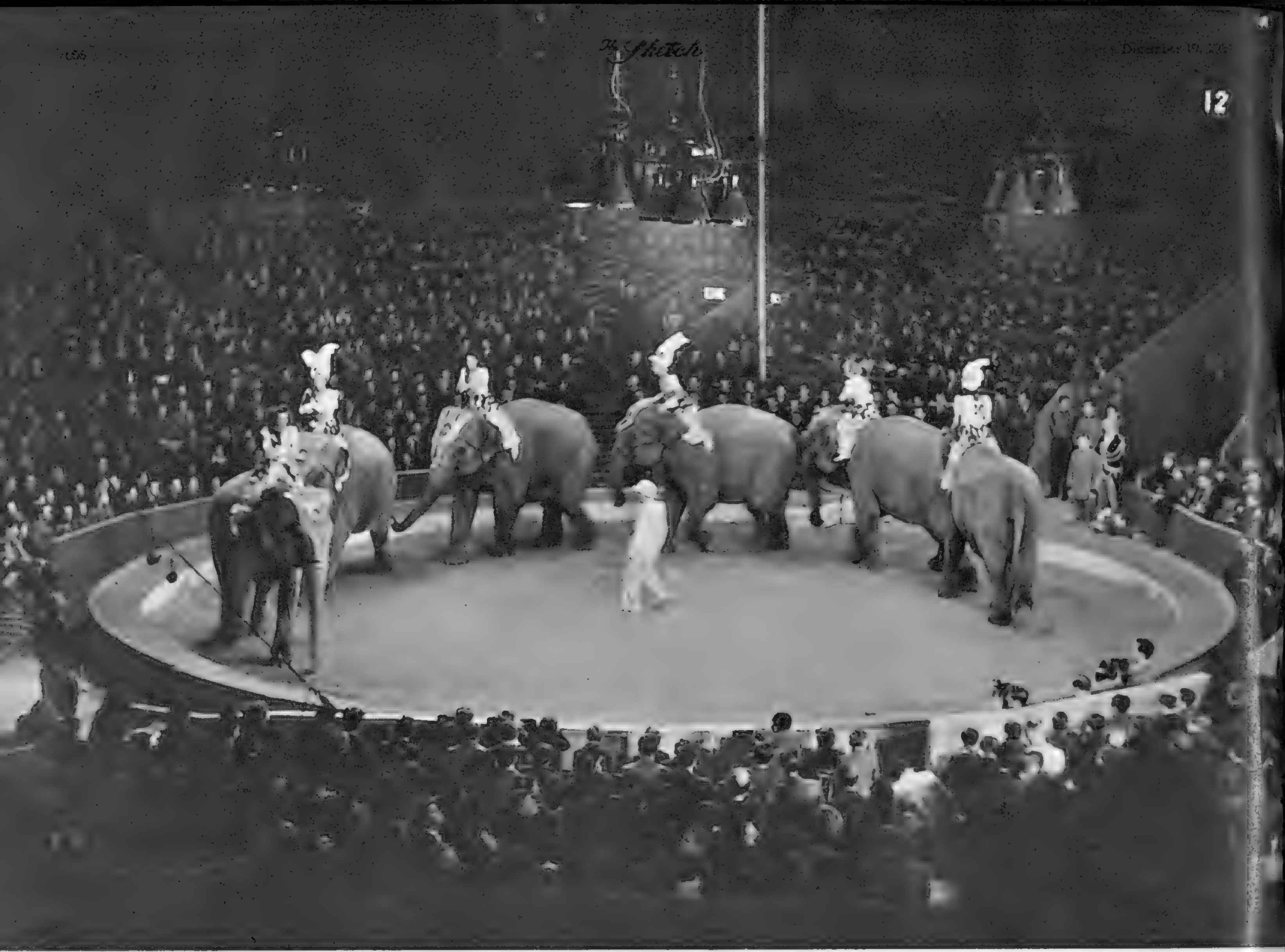
IN DALLIANCE WITH DALI

The second London exhibition of the eccentric genius Salvador Dali is again held in the Lefevre Gallery ; closes on December 21. Here are four of the forty paintings and drawings he shows. A mystic of great imagination, Dali is a wonderful draughtsman, a master of *trompe l'œil*. Painting with the infinite precision of the seventeenth-century Dutch Masters, he is sometimes reminiscent of Hieronymus Bosch ; sometimes he draws like Leonardo da Vinci. His colours are, on the whole, superb. With Dali the subconscious is always at work ; his inspiration drawn, he says, from atmospheric vibrations through the antennæ of his carefully-tended moustache. His Russian-born wife Gala is often his model. Salvador Dali was born at Figueras, in Spain, a small Catalan town where his father, a notary, was a leading citizen. He studied at the Fine Arts School in Madrid till he was twenty-two. He and his wife now spend their summers in a charming house with patio, in the little fishing village of Port Lligat, near Cadaques, on the Mediterranean coast.

ÉTUDE DE NU, 1950.

PORTRAIT OF THE COUNTESS MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA.
Painted in Paris early in 1940.

DALI À SIX ANS SOULEVANT AVEC PRÉCAUTION LA PEAU DE L'EAU POUR OBSERVER UN CHIEN DORMIR À L'OMBRE DE LA MER.



THE CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

By Rupert Croft-Cooke

NOT ONLY TO LONDON TOWN, be it remembered, but to every big city in the British Isles and to most European capitals. For since Bertram Mills revived its flagging tradition after the First World War, the Circus has grown in popularity and prestige until no country district is without a visit from one of the tenting shows in summer and no large town without a winter circus which amalgamates the talent from these.

Circus fans never seem able to make up their minds about these two contrasting shows. Which do they prefer ? Which is true circus ? Astley started the whole thing in Lambeth nearly 200 years ago, but the Sangers were famous for their great parades through country towns. For me both are enchanting, the little one-pole tent which appears on the village green, with the artistes helping to put out the seating and take the money, and the great London circuses, with their split-second timing, their massed talent, their brilliant production.

The tendency in Circus, as in so many things, is to return to the pre-Victorian. Philip Astley was the founder of the Circus as we know it because he was the first man since Roman times to provide a mixed entertainment in a ring. It included jugglers, wire-walkers, animal trainers, but Astley and Ducrow, who followed him, were first and foremost horsemen and horses were the chief attraction of their shows. To-day no Circus would think of a programme without liberty horses and riding acts, and there are even revivals of the early equestrian spectacles like " The Courier of St. Petersburg." This year, for instance, there will be the Schumanns' Grand Carousel at Harringay, while at Olympia the Cumberlands, the famous troupe of bareback riders, are back, and there are two new groups of liberty horses, the Lippizanas from Vienna and, for the first time, a number of Fjord horses from Norway, spectacular-looking creatures, strangely marked with beige and black. Not to mention Phyllis Allan and her twelve Shetlands.

Both the London circuses will also have elephants, for these animals, which were first seen in a circus ring in Paris in the year after Waterloo, are strong favourites, both with grown-ups and with that more important part of a circus audience, the children. Elephants have been trained to play football and cricket, to knock down skittles with a ball rolled from their trunks, to somersault and to walk the tight-rope. This year the brothers Cyril and Bernard Mills believe they have a discovery in their young Swedish elephant trainer, Gosta Kruse, who, twenty-four years old, must be the youngest trainer in the business. His control of the animals is uncanny. At Harringay is the original Elephant Boy of the films, Sabu, who is making his first appearance in Circus.

Circus history has been made lurid by fatal accidents, falls from the high wire or the trapeze, mistimings which have cost life or limb. Audiences have come to expect that at least one act will make them hold their breath or turn away, not daring to watch, and this year they will see enough displays of danger to scare the hardiest of them. Rose Gold, the " Eiffel Tower Girl," is at Harringay to dive through space to a dizzy perch, and here also are the Croneras on the flying trapeze. Olympia shows Wickbold doing a wall-of-death act high up in the dome and the Flying Condoras on the trapeze.

Perhaps the widest difference between the old Circus and the modern is in the wild-animal acts, which even a century ago went on with the beating of gongs and firing of guns amid clouds of smoke to heighten the impression of terror. Trainers to-day have learnt that patience is their first necessity and that animals perform far better if they are happy than if they are afraid. At Olympia there will be bears on scooters, chimpanzees with their Italian trainer, Amletto Sciplini, lions and tigers. At Harringay a mixed group of lions, bears, tigers and leopards.

Everywhere, in every circus ring from Finland to Patagonia, the eternal clowns will tumble and grin, catch one another bending, squirt water, be tripped, smacked, prodded, scorned and applauded to the delirious shouts of happy children. Each London circus has its distinguished Augustes (Coco at Olympia, the Francescos at Harringay), and these have their own acts. But it is that hard-working, seemingly idiotic figure of fun, the traditional clown, who must occupy the attention of the audience while apparatus is erected or pulled down, who by spontaneous lunacy with nothing but a toy red-hot poker or a nodding peacock's feather, must raise laughter at his own expense. Without them, and their dunces' hats and painted grins, the most splendidly-spangled show could not go on.

Round the "roll 'em" table, l. to r.: Mr. Brian Hunt, Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Emanuel, Miss Donnelly, Mr. Michael Emanuel. Brian Hunt claimed a win. Mrs. Phillips and Miss Donnelly had already shown remarkably good aim at the coconut shy.

By "THE SKETCH" special photographer, Harold White, F.I.B.P., F.R.P.S.

At Southampton's T.A. Officers' Ball

Piper Kinghorn, ex-Scots Guards, arrived at midnight to play for the dancing of eightsome reels—here is one of them in progress—for the special benefit of the Scottish element who celebrated St. Andrew's Day. His entry was heralded by trumpeters of the R.H.A.

Draped tent-like in the cyclamen and white candy-striped muslin used in July at Brighton's Regency Ball, the Blighmont T.A. Centre was enchantingly transformed from drill-hall to dance-hall for the Southampton Territorial Officers' Ball on November 30. Glittering cellophane chandeliers hung from the centre; palms outlined the dance-floor, three sides of which provided tables for the 500 officers and their guests who danced to the music of Gil Hulme and his band. On the "walls" hung wreaths in black and gold designs, linked by festoons of leaves. And it wasn't only the women's dresses which supplied kaleidoscopic colour, for it came too from the officers' uniforms, some men in full dress from the King's Troop, R.H.A., St. John's Wood, and two Royal Hampshiremen from the regimental depôt at Winchester, dressed in the scarlet-and-buff uniforms worn by the Regiment at the Battle of Minden (1759). Refreshments were amply provided in buffet bars in the ante-rooms.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Douglas and Lady Evill examined the impressive China Cup. This trophy for small-bore shooting teams of the R.A. is now held by the 14th Battn. Parachute Regiment (5th Royal Hampshires), whose H.Q. is at Southampton.

[Continued overleaf.

Huge flags decorated the west hall, which was arranged as a reception foyer and cloakroom. Sitting out here are, l. to r. : Captain and Mrs. Henderson, with Captain and Mrs. Cannon.

This angle on table arrangements was taken from the balcony ; shows the complete transformation from drill-hall to dance-hall.

L. to r. : Brig. H. A. Hayes, Mrs. Burgess Webb, Capt. Tatnell, Lieut.-Col. Burgess Webb. In background : Major Cuthbertson-Smith, chairman of the Ball ; and Pte. Goddard of the Royal Hampshires, in the regimental uniform of the Battle of Minden. Units of the regiment are serving at Minden for the first time since the battle.

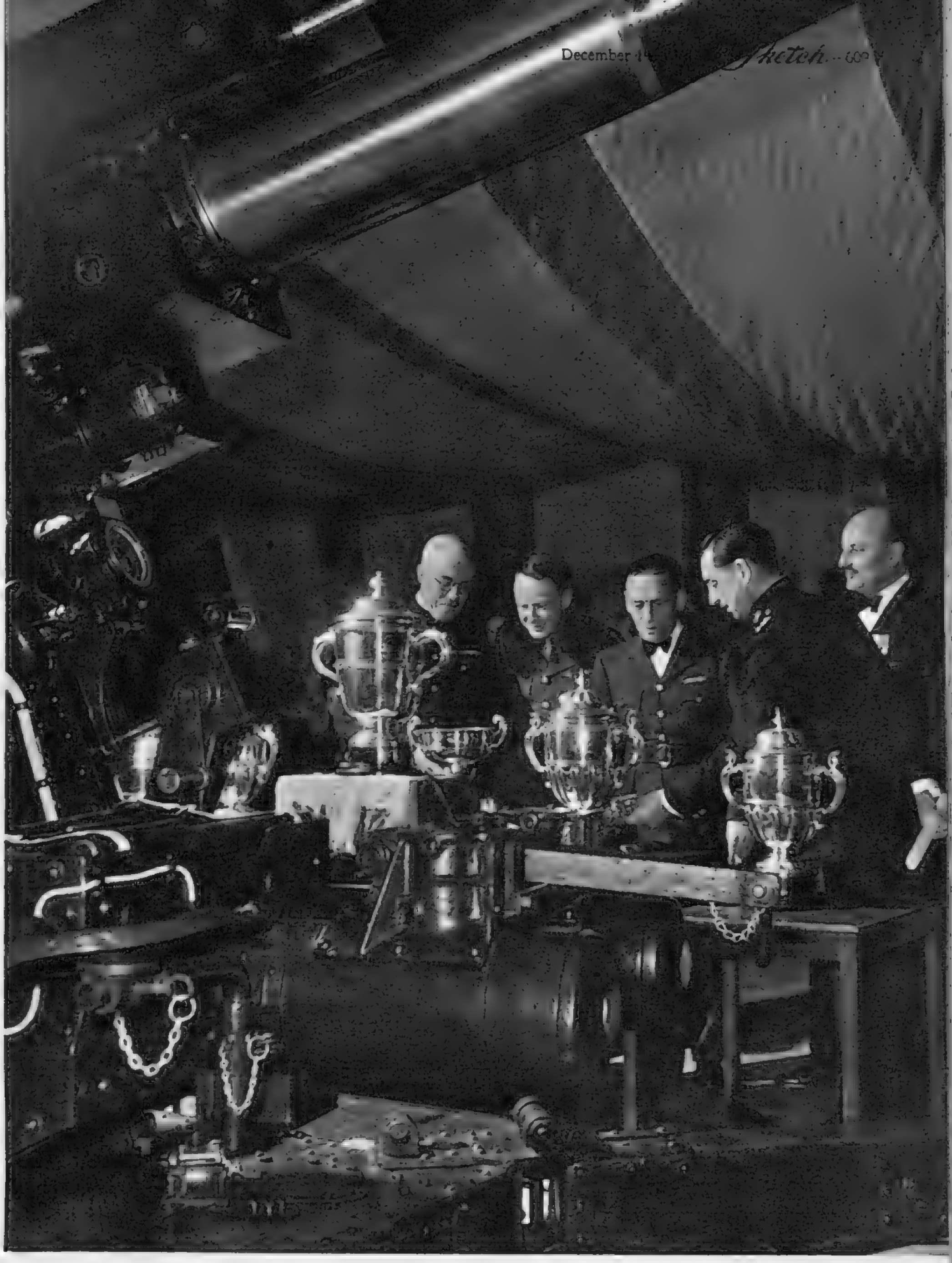
In the Officers' Mess the C.O., Lt.-Col. Orman, entertained a small private party. L. to r. : Brig. Cholmeley, Mrs. Cholmeley, Mrs. H. C. Phipps, Mrs. Orman (seated), Mr. R. J. Raggett (Sec., Hampshire T.A.), Lt.-Col. F. T. Orman, Maj.-Gen. H. C. Phipps, Mr. Arthur Smith, and (seated) Mrs. Smith and Gen. Pratt.

In the foyer before the dance began, l. to r. : Commander J. C. H. Nelson, Mrs. Pyke, Mrs. Nelson, Colonel Pyke and Major-Gen. F. W. H. Pratt, Colonel-Commandant of the Royal Artillery and hon. Colonel of the 675th Regiment.

Southampton's T.A. Officers' Ball

(Continued)

The C.O. and Mrs. Orman (left) received guests in a small ante-room. Here they are welcoming Mr. G. H. Ewart Garland, who was with his wife.



A big gun and regimental trophies decorated the west hall, making a point of interest for men awaiting their partners. Here, l. to r., are: Lieut.-Col. Willis, Lieut.-Col. Hore, Flying Officer Bosworth, Captain Phillips and Mr. James Andrew.

Two men of the Royal Horse Artillery—the only mounted artillery unit in existence—told Major D. R. Stenhouse and his wife of their trials with ceremonial headgear.

A party at supper were, l. to r.: Mrs. Waddelow Martin, Mrs. Strowlger, Commander Waddelow Martin, R.N.V.R., Divisional Chief Surgeon, and Captain E. J. Strowlger, C.O. the Solent Division, R.N.V.R.

"A CHRISTMAS CAROL" ON THE SCREEN

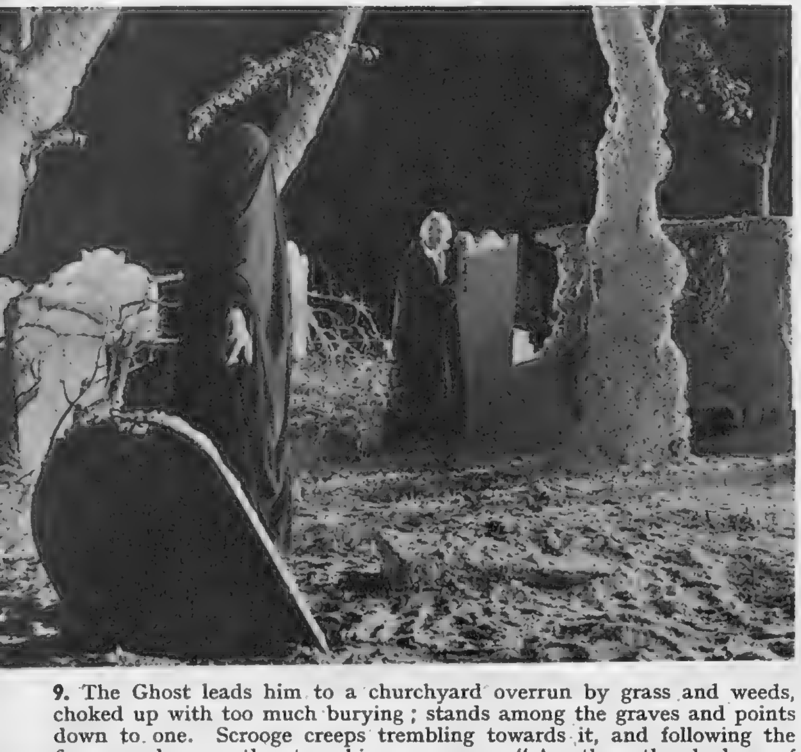
Charles Dickens' delight in sending chills down our spines is exemplified in the screen version of his much-beloved Christmas story. George Minter's film, *Scrooge*, has Alastair Sim as the old miser who repents of his wicked life just before it is too late. The London scene of a hundred years ago has been carefully re-created.

1. Old Marley was dead as a door-nail: but his Ghost, encircled by a chain of cash-boxes, keys, ledgers and deed-boxes, upbraids the tight-fisted, inhuman Ebenezer Scrooge for his wicked ways.

2. Marley's Ghost warns his lifelong friend and business partner that there is but one chance left of reformation—three Spirits will visit him to show him the way. The first, the Ghost of Christmas Past, a gentle figure with a snowy mane, shows Scrooge his early life, his birthplace, a melancholy schoolroom, the death of his beloved little sister Fan.

5. They enter poor Bob Cratchit's house, where Bob, his humble, overworked and underpaid clerk, is proposing a toast to his employer—a proposal not popular with the family, but his little crippled son Tiny Tim joins in with "God bless us every one." "Will Tiny Tim live?" Scrooge enquires of the Ghost.

6. The Ghost shows Scrooge a glimpse of the Cratchit family as they might be some years later. There is a vacant seat in Tiny Tim's corner by the hearth, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. "If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here."



9. The Ghost leads him to a churchyard overrun by grass and weeds, choked up with too much burying; stands among the graves and points down to one. Scrooge creeps trembling towards it, and following the finger reads upon the stone his own name. "Are these the shadows of the things that *will* be, or the things that *may* be, only?" he asks.

10. The nightmare ends suddenly as repentance utterly overwhelms Scrooge. He is awakened from sleep by his charwoman with his early morning cup of tea. Overjoyed to be alive, he capers about, kisses her on the stairs and raises her wages. Mrs. Dilber fears for his sanity. "I'll buy that prize turkey and send it off to the Cratchits!" he promises her.

3. He shows him the warehouse where he was apprenticed under Old Fezziwig, his oily, rich, jovial employer; they watch the fun at the Fezziwig Christmas party; his proposal to Alice; later (above), his break with her when he puts money before matrimony. Already as a young man Scrooge's face has begun to wear signs of care and avarice.

4. The second spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Present, a genial, bearded, mocking giant, follows to take Scrooge on another journey. He shows him the Christmas celebrations in the home of his affectionate nephew Fred, where he, too, might have been had he not refused the invitation. Scrooge has remorse in his soul and is strangely moved by these scenes.

7. The third spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come, is a mute, forbidding phantom shrouded in black with nothing visible save one outstretched pointing hand. He shows Scrooge his business colleagues discussing a recent death without emotion or regret; his own dark, empty house, a bare, uncurtained bed, on which lies something covered up.

8. He shows him wretched, straggling houses, people half-naked, drunken, ugly, a quarter reeking with crime, filth and misery. Here, a rascally rag-and-bone man, in a tattered parlour, bargains over a dead man's effects. A laundress has purloined bed linen; an undertaker, a seal or two of no great value; Scrooge's charwoman has bed-curtains to offer.

11. As merry as a schoolboy, giddy as a drunken man, off goes Scrooge to nephew Fred's party, where he is a welcome, if belated, guest. He dances with his pretty niece by marriage, and then with her plump sister; plays at forfeits and at blindman's buff, and sits by the fire listening to his niece play upon the harp. Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful happiness! Never had Scrooge enjoyed himself so much.

12. He raised Bob Cratchit's salary and became a second father to Tiny Tim who, of course, did not die. He went to church and became as good a friend, as good a master and as good a man as the good city ever knew.

Photographed by Houston Rogers.

VIVACIOUS

Young British musical-comedy stars are few and far between, but a girl with a bright future is Audrey Freeman. At present she has three small parts singing, dancing and acting, in Emile Littler's *Zip Goes a Million*, at the Palace Theatre. She was "discovered" while on tour in *Annie Get Your Gun*, in which she played the juvenile lead. Audrey is nineteen, vivacious, versatile ; hopes to become another Ginger Rogers.

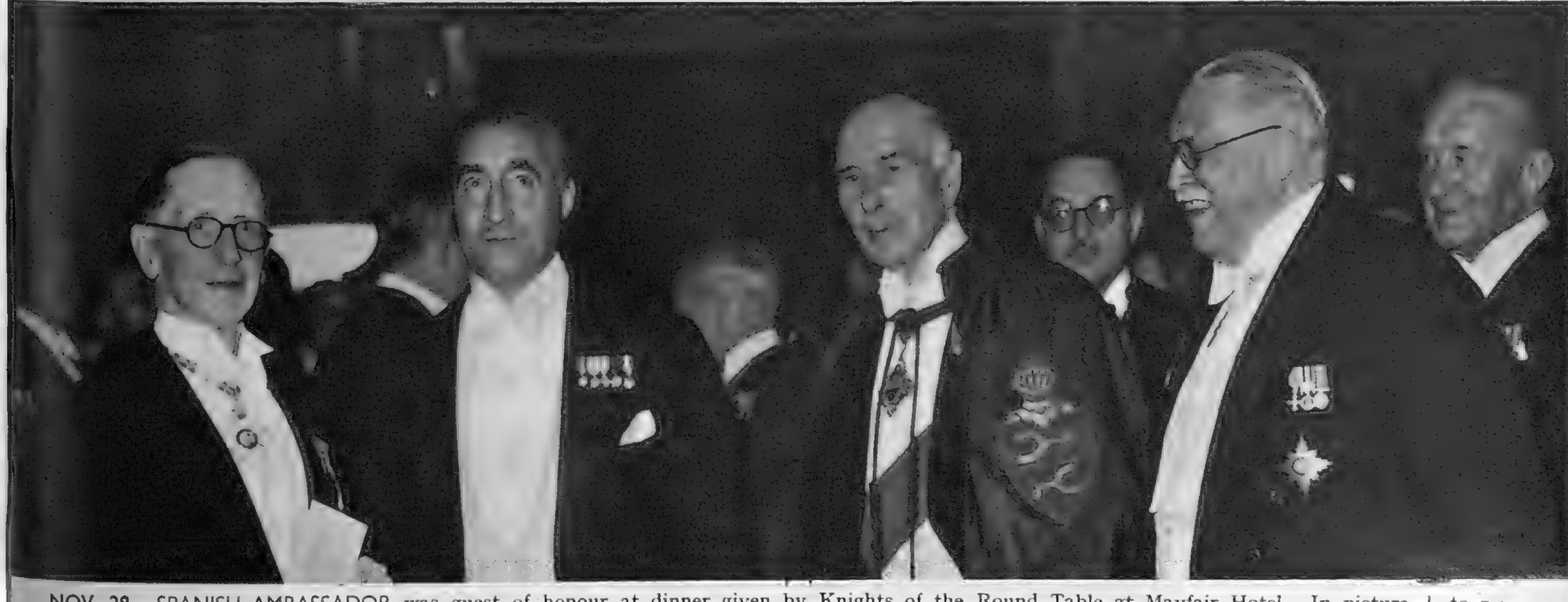
Excerpts from our Social Diary

NOV. 26.—OXFORD WEDDING. Miss Jane P. Hanks, daughter of Mr. R. F. Hanks, a director of new Morris–Austin merger, and Mrs. Hanks, sends me this picture of her recent wedding at St. Aldate's to Mr. D. S. Leese, son of Mr. and Mrs. Leese.

NOV. 28.—GREY DAY, but springlike colour at Frost and Reed's, where hung Deirdre Henty-Creer's show of paintings. At crowded Private View the painter, left, with Cdr. Martin, U.S. Navy, and Mrs. Martin, whose portrait is seen left.

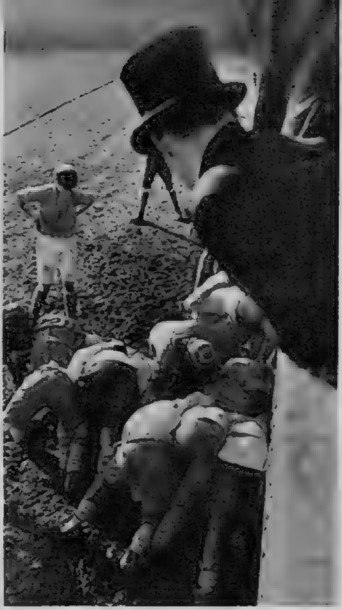
NOV. 28.—IN LONDON, the Hon. Jean M. Montagu, Lord Swaythling's daughter, married Mr. Lintorn Trevor Highett, son of the late Major C. T. Highett, and of Mrs. Highett, of Cheyne Court. Reception at Hyde Park Hotel; honeymoon in Paris.

NOV. 28.—RELATIVE VALUES première at the Savoy was attended by Princess Margaret and the Duchess of Kent in a party of twelve. Mr. Noël Coward, its playwright, seen in the picture, attended them into the theatre. Later the Princess and the Duchess went on to party at Lord Rothermere's Warwick House, where her Royal Highness enjoyed herself immensely, danced indefatigably; finished up at 3 a.m.



NOV. 28.—SPANISH AMBASSADOR was guest of honour at dinner given by Knights of the Round Table at Mayfair Hotel. In picture, l. to r.: Sir Robert Hodgson, H.E. the Spanish Ambassador the Duke of Primo de Rivera, Knight President Lord Athlone, Sir Bertram Jones. Club exists for promotion of international good-fellowship on lines laid down by legendary King Arthur. H.Q. is the Mayfair, where is kept Round Table, world's biggest one-piece table, made of Andaman padauk. Among many famous members: Charles Dickens; David Garrick, whose snuff-box, painted by Hogarth, is a Club's treasured possession. Club, believed founded 1720; its H.Q. *Fountain* Coffee-house in Strand.

Excerpts from our Social Diary



NOV. 30.—MUDDIED OAFS at Eton's annual Wall Game, celebrating St. Andrew's Day, and a selection of immaculate spectators hurrying to the fray included, *Left*: l. to r.: Mrs. E. W. Winch, Dr. Winch, and A. A. Stanley Clarke. *Centre:* The match between Collegers and Oppidans—another draw. *Right:* L. to r.: Mr. J. C. Hogg, Miss Hogg and J. D. Hogg. This was the 111th match of the series, in which Oppidans have won 37 games, Collegers 32, while 41 games have been drawn.

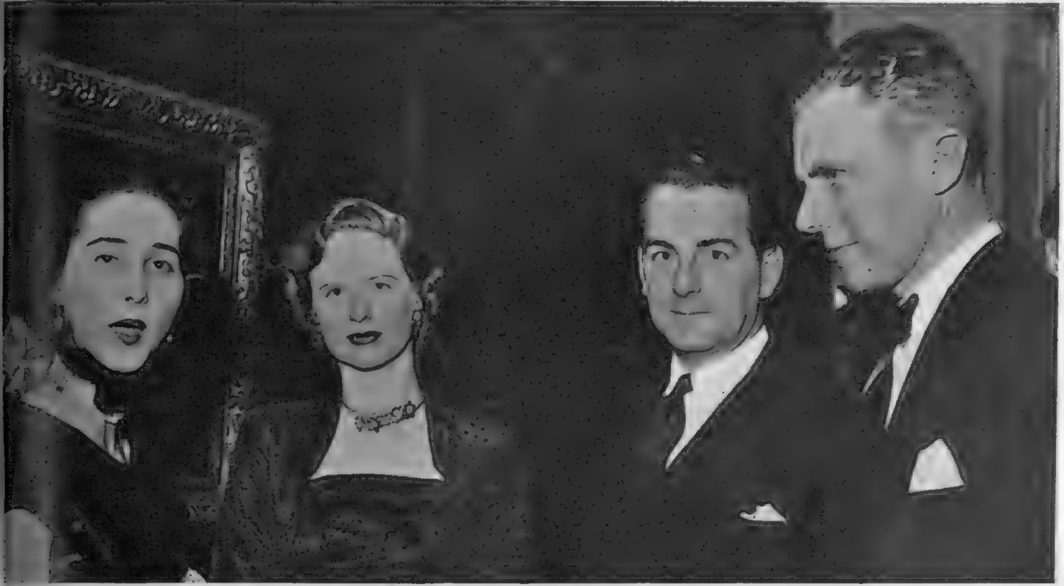
NOV. 30.—SEVENTY-SEVEN, and in top form in difficult times is Mr. Winston Churchill, Prime Minister, with his wife. Birthday cake, shaped like square bowler, bore feathers inscribed with phases of his career. Biggest feather marked "Clementine"—Mrs. Churchill's name.

NOV. 30.—THE HAGGIS was piped in at the 286th anniversary Festival Dinner of the Royal Scottish Corporation, held at London's Grosvenor House. The King's piper, Pipe-Major Alexander Macdonald, led the way. At table, applauding, l. to r.: Lord Reading, Lady Rosebery, the Rt. Hon. James Miller, Edinburgh's Lord Provost, Lady Sempill, Lord Rosebery, President of the Corporation, Lady Kinnaird.

NOV. 30.—ANNUAL BALL of Officers of 285th Airborne Field Regiment, R.A., Essex, T.A.—senior Artillery Regiment of the 16th Airborne Division—quite a mouthful—was held at Artillery House, The Green, Stratford. *On left*, Miss Julie Anthony, Major G. V. Barker-Benfield, M.C., and Mrs. Tasker, toasted Major Tasker, on the right, whose birthday fell fortuitously on the day of the Ball. *Right:* Miss Anthony danced with Brigadier A. D. M. Teacher.

DEC. 3.—OLYMPIC TRAINING in Swiss Alps was goal for which Miss Sheena Mackintosh was bound. The Duke of Hamilton's niece, she's one of our best women skiers. She said good-bye to fiancé Mr. Ruaraidh Hilleary at Victoria before leaving with sister Vora to join other members of 1952 women's team.

DEC. 4.—PRICES WENT UP on second day of Newmarket Bloodstock Sales. Lord Rosebery was top with 11,000 gns. for his three-year-old filly *Staffa*, by *Hyperion—Jiffy*, and half-sister to 1944 Derby winner *Ocean Swell*. In picture: Northern trainer Mr. Pat Beasley, Lady Irwin (centre) and Lady Alexandra Beasley.



DEC. 4.—AT THE LEFEVRE Gallery a wonderful packed evening party to meet surrealist Salvador Dali and his wife; view his paintings, drink champagne and talk. I never saw so many beautiful girls—many of them Spanish, and mostly wearing fashionable little eye-veils; so many good-looking men. The dresses were good, too; and for some of the paintings you should turn to pages 604-605; they caused lots of discussion, drew admiration for meticulous craftsmanship, marvellous colour. *Picture left:* Lady Duncannon, Lady Edith Foxwell, Mr. Ivan Foxwell, Lord Duncannon. *Right:* Lady Dufferin and Ava with Salvador Dali.

DEC. 7.—FIRST HUNDRED YEARS of the Royal Academy is the subject of its Winter Exhibition; one of the finest ever, with works by great masters from Royal collection loaned by the King; others loaned by private owners; public galleries. In picture: Helen, Duchess of Northumberland on Private View day.

DEC. 8.—H.E. THE SWEDISH AMBASSADOR wore a normal pin-striped suit at the Swedish Christmas bazaar held in the Swedish drill-hall, Harcourt Street. But Mme. Hägglof, their eleven-year-old son Axel, and little Cecilia Unger were baroque, colourful and decorative in their national costume. Cecilia was selling candies with a persuasive smile.

Excerpts from our Social Diary

LONDON'S UNITED WARDS' CLUB DINNER

The President of the United Wards' Club, Mr. B. G. Arthur, greeted London's Lord Mayor, Sir Leslie Boyce.

Sheriff James Harman was neighbour at table to Major Stanley Wells—Sheriff two years ago.

Alderman Sir Frederick M. Wells chatted to Mr. Derek Curtis-Bennett, K.C., who made the response to the toast "Our Guests."

Conversation piece, l. to r.: Capt. J. F. C. Bennett, Past President; Mr. E. A. Pearson, Chairman of the National Leather Goods Association; Major C. G. Surtees Shill, Vice-President of the United Wards' Club, and Capt. Humphrey L. Gilks, Master of the Worshipful Company of Saddlers.

DEC. 10.—GAIETY GALORE and good stories were highlights of the 75th Anniversary Dinner of the United Wards' Club of the City of London at Grosvenor House. Lace cravats, decorations, brightened the sombre "tails" of members; instrumental music was played by a quintet from the Guildhall School of Music. London's Lord Mayor, Sir Leslie Boyce, and Mr. Derek Curtis-Bennett were excellent raconteurs; the latter's story of a recent case in which split mind was advanced as a plea by the defence, and the Recorder's weary answer: . . . "Then you will *both* do five years," brought down the house.

Colonel E. H. Carkeet-James, resident Governor of the Tower of London, and General Sir G. Ivor Thomas, Q.M.G. to the Forces.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by George Konig.

ROUGH-RIDERS DINED IN ARMOURERS' HALL

Celebrating their fiftieth anniversary, about seventy officers, past and present, of the City of London Yeomanry (Rough-Riders) dined on Dec. 11 in Armourers' Hall, Coleman Street, E.C., amid relics of seven centuries of the craft. The regiment had been adopted by one of the City's oldest Livery Companies—the Armourers and Braziers—and their own H.Q. was destroyed during the blitz. Col. the Rt. Hon. Lord Limerick, their honorary Colonel and one-time C.O., presided. On his right sat the commander of the 56th (London) Armoured Division, T.A., Maj.-Gen. R. W. Goodbody—a past adjutant. On Lord Limerick's left was Brig. D. H. Currie. The Rough-Riders were formed by Lord Maitland during the South African War. During World War I. they served as cavalry, infantry, machine-gunners in Gallipoli, Palestine, France. Between the wars they were Horse Artillery; converted before 1939 to a Bofors unit. In World War II. they served in France and Italy. To-day they are the senior armoured regiment of the London 56th Armoured Division, T.A. A trumpeter sounded the call for dinner, and during the feast the band of the Life Guards played; while sergeants of the Regiment, in the old full-dress uniform of French grey and purple, stood with lance and pennant at the foot of each table. The three silver candelabra on the top table were presented to the Mess this year by ex-Officers to celebrate the year and help replace Mess silver lost during the war.

A BRILLIANT PERFORMANCE . . .

. . . by Anita Björk in the title-rôle is the outstanding memory of *Miss Julie*—the film version, now running in London, of Strindberg's long one-act play. This picture, co-winner of the first prize in the Cannes Festival 1951 (the other being the Italian *The Miracle of Milan*) is one of the most striking of post-war films, and is dealt with more fully by our critic on page 628. It is briefly the story of the ill-conceived intrigue between Julie, daughter of a Swedish Count, and her father's handsome valet Jean, who is played by Ulf Palme. They are seen here at the crux of their fateful association—one of the most moving moments of the film.

TALKING OF TELEVISION

By Cyril Butcher

WHATEVER other problems may face those who shall draw up the B.B.C.'s new charter when the present one has outrun its allotted span and six months' grace, the most important question to be answered is: "Is Britain to have commercial television, or not?"

We use the expression "commercial television" deliberately, because the idea of a modified sponsorship of programmes, which is finding favour in some official minds, is doomed to still-birth. Merely to have their products mentioned *en passant* in the script will not tempt the manufacturers to lay out good money on expensive programmes. They will expect to have their goods plugged and dinned into the public's consciousness. This may not be so genteel as modified sponsorship, but it will bring in business, which, believe it or not, is still the aim of the commercial world!

Much the same thoughts passed through the mind of Harry Alan Towers when we discussed this whole question with him. "It's the old tale of the man who pays the piper expecting to call the tune. Advertising, whatever form it takes, costs money, and the advertiser demands a return for his outlay."

Mr. Towers may need introduction to the reader, for, though he is one of the most important figures in the radio world, he works largely in the background. But that indefatigable young man yearly earns this country a great many dollars by the recorded radio programmes which he sells across the Atlantic. He is about to do the same with pre-filmed television programmes. Naturally he would welcome a commercial invasion of this country's broadcasting. He feels the competition would do a lot of good. "Anywhere where there is competition in entertainment, you will find the best talent working the hardest, and that always benefits the public. As regards commercial television, I think it could be easily introduced and the revenue from it would provide that little extra which would make it possible for the B.B.C. to raise the standards of its own programmes."

The end ideal of Mr. Towers and others would be to have a "channel" devoted entirely to commercial television, with its own transmission and relay system. But even if such a thing were to be sanctioned, it would not be possible to bring it about in these days when the Defence Programme casts its shadow over any new project. As things stand at present, with only one channel, the B.B.C.'s present schedules, with only the slightest adjustment, could easily accommodate commercial programmes at times which would be quite tempting to "buy," such as from 6 to 8 p.m. and from 10.30 p.m. till midnight.

"For times like those," Mr. Towers went on, "the bigger advertisers would probably be prepared to pay at the rate of £1000 an hour and spend anything up to £2,500 on the programme, depending on its length. To the B.B.C. that would mean an income of over £1,000,000 a year.

"You would also find that television attracted people of higher standards, actors, directors, musicians and so on. With the present film slump, there is any amount of experienced and brilliant talent to draw upon."

We don't profess to be much good at prediction, but surely commercial television must eventually come. If it helps to solve the problem of Light Entertainment, we shall welcome it.

In the immediate present, we would welcome anything that would lift the immaculately unsponsored programmes out of the rut they have got themselves in. Even something downright bad would be a relief. Nowadays everything seems to be quite good and quite dull.

We make a happy exception of *To Live in Peace*, an Italian play by Giovacchino Forzano, translated by Victor Rietti, who also gave an utterly delightful performance in the leading part. The production was gently handled by Fred O'Donovan.

We were quite happy, too, to sit through *The Angel Who Pawned Her Harp*, one of the short plays which occasionally appear in the schedule. This one, by Charles Terrot, is explained by the title. Pawnbroker: Martin Miller; Angel: Ann Summers—both charming performances.

This year's *Gang Show* did not floor us with Ralph Reader's inventiveness; and we found the humour a shade on the beamy side for this type of show.

In *To Live in Peace*, Don Geronimo, priest of an eighteenth-century Italian village, proves to be Napoleon's uncle. He is offered a cardinalship but he declines, knowing his duty lies with his simple flock. Victor Rietti played the priest.

The Second Stain, in the successful Sherlock Holmes series, once again featured Raymond Francis as Dr. Watson and Alan Wheatley as Holmes. C. A. Lejeune adapted the series for television from Conan Doyle's famous detective stories.

The plot of *La Belle Hélène* begins to thicken. This popular Offenbach operetta was recently televised and received a mixed reception. Here Paris (Gerald Davies) tells Calchas (Edmund Donlevy) the story of the golden apple. Philocomus (Ray Jackson) is officially too young to hear such a tale.

AT THE THEATRE.

West End Favourites

THE HOLLOW
(Ambassadors)

For some reason—one of those inexplicable changes of taste—dramatists to-day are shy of puzzle-plays that are explicitly puzzles. We rarely have to guess who killed A, and to discuss the possible guilt of B, C or D. In *The Hollow*, to our general pleasure, Agatha Christie has written a puzzle, in the old style, that is both exceptionally neat and is acted, as it deserves, by Jeanne de Casalis, Jessica Spencer and the Ambassadors cast.

SEAGULLS OVER SORRENTO
(Apollo)

After eighteen months we are still in the Orkneys, on a lump of rock that is christened, solely owing to a dramatist's whim, Sorrento. The dramatist is Hugh Hastings. His mosaic of comedy and melodrama, composed alertly (notice his way with the effective "curtains"), and as alertly acted, has not flagged since the première in the far, forgotten June of 1950. Ronald Shiner, who is used to long runs, leads the cast as an endearingly shrewd ornament of the Lower Deck.

THE LITTLE HUT
(Lyric)

This is also an island, but of a very different type. Here we are in the tropics ; there is a shining Oliver Messel set, and the castaways—in Peter Brook's production—seem to live in a world of perpetual sunlight and deep blue skies. When we say that the castaways are Robert Morley, Joan Tetzel and David Tomlinson ; and that Nancy Mitford has adapted the comedy from the French of André Roussin, there is little need to add more.

GAY'S THE WORD
(Saville)

Naturally. It could not be otherwise, with Cicely Courtneidge, and her abounding good cheer, at the head of the cast, and some of Ivor Novello's gayest and lightest music. Alan Melville has written appropriate lyrics, and the piece is a thoroughly brisk run of nonsense that takes its name from the song "Vitality" which ends the first act. Nothing could stand more aptly for the piece.

THE LOVE OF FOUR COLONELS
(Wyndham's)

Peter Ustinov's play, which is not so much a moment of truth as several moments of sheer fantasy, goes on and on—and deservedly. Managers say that audiences will not "take" fantasy. Here is something to contradict them : an extraordinary caprice in which Ustinov proves his versatility by appearing during the night in five parts, with the aid of such people as Moira Lister (the Sleeping Beauty), Gwen Cherrell and Colin Gordon.

★ First Choice ★

RELATIVE VALUES
(Savoy)

WHEN Noël Coward appeared after *Ace of Clubs* eighteen months ago, there was a certain liveliness in a disappointed gallery. But, after *Relative Values* and cannonading applause, Coward from his box waved a friendly hand to the gallery before disappearing as if dissolved by a local genie.

Is it a good comedy ? Here one shuffles. If a good comedy is one that gives sharp delight during performance, *Relative Values* deserves the name. If it is a play that should also keep the mind after production, one begins to doubt. The truth is that Coward has done another expert conjuring-trick. He has spirited the comedy upon the stage just as neatly as he was spirited from his box when the night was over.

Relative Values glints with lines that flash the stage into light when spoken. All are uncommonly amusing in the theatre, less so outside it. That is why, though I laughed throughout the première and covered the programme with scribbles, I can only reproduce diffidently such a typical phrase as "She used to walk across a ballroom as if she were trudging through deep snow." Still, it is ungrateful to hedge and to dither when Coward has done what he intended: to write an adroitly theatrical piece ; to freshen some not-very-new ideas by the light airs of his wit, the vigour of his direction.

Gladys Cooper, as elegant and wittily-poised as ever, is the Dowager Countess of Marshwood. Angela Baddeley is the lady's maid whose loathed and forgotten younger sister is a Hollywood film-star. Judy Campbell is the star who proposes to marry Lady Marshwood's son, the Earl. It is a pleasant wheel of comedy. The characters spin it round, quietly in the first act, at top speed in the second, slackening a little in the third. Coward has enjoyed himself. In one scene Miranda Frayle, from Hollywood (forgetting that she was Freda Birch from Sidcup, and not knowing that her own sister is glowering beside her), invents her life as a London slum-child who danced romantically to the barrel-organ, and who had a drunken mother. Later on, Judy Campbell and Hugh McDermott (as the film actor who has come from Hollywood to rescue Miranda) are relishingly dramatic in terms of the screen. McDermott's performance has a special tang. The fellow is framed and glazed. He moves stiffly, a doped sleep-walker, but he is never drunk enough to forget the cameras.

"It is a high comedy situation," observes the butler (Richard Leech) at one point. "Think how Maugham would have handled it. . . ." Maybe ; but this (Coward knows, none better) will do—and do very well.

. with J. C. TREWIN

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE
(Old Vic)

DAVID GARRICK was always sorry that he did not appear as Lord Ogleby. And no wonder. After all, in 1765-66, he wrote this part for himself. George Colman the Elder, who collaborated in the piece, was rightly indignant when Garrick capriciously refused to create Ogleby at Drury Lane. Even so, it became one of the celebrated parts of its time: the frail old fop who, after being (as his valet says) brushed and oiled and screwed and wound-up morning by morning, is ready for any amorous adventures of the day.

Donald Wolfit, at the Vic, disguises his familiar mannerisms remarkably. As a rule, we get from him a strong painting in oils. His Ogleby is, very rightly, a water-colour. The old fellow is handled quickly and lightly. Too much pressure here would have been fatal. For the rest, Hilton Edwards has driven along the comedy of intrigue at the proper rate. Some of the acting (Wynne Clark's, undoubtedly, as a dragon-dame) may appear over-emphatic; but this kind of play does not respond too well to extreme subtlety. The contrast with Wolfit's Ogleby is all the sharper, even if we wish now and then—especially in the last scene—for a little more peace-and-quiet.

There is some agreeable work. Charmian Eyre is delightfully the heroine whose secret marriage to the penniless Lovewell gives a title to the play; and the flourish of André Morell, the loyalty of Rosalind Iden (in a most unrewarding part), and the solidity of Ernest Hare as Sterling, the City merchant, are all valuable. Sterling has been told about landscape-gardening, and he says of his own prized walks: "None of your straight lines here; but all taste: zigzag, crinkum-crankum, in and out, right and left, to and again; twisting and turning like a worm." It might well be a description of the comedy.

★

THE GREAT ADVENTURE
(Arts Theatre Club)

ARNOLD BENNETT had a cheerful idea for book and play when he thought of Ilam Carve, the eminent (and shy) artist who was quite willing for his valet to be buried in his stead in Westminster Abbey. It seems now to be a leisurely piece, and we have to admit that Bennett did not expand the idea as thoroughly as he might have done. For all that, it makes a brisk venture in the realistic-fantastic; and it is acted well enough at the Arts, if without notable inspiration. Both Ilam Carve and his matter-of-course Janet should have stronger personalities. Still, Maurice Denham and Jenney Laird here offer likeable miniatures, and there is one brief performance—David Hurst's, as Ebag, the picture-dealer—that is something of the right size.

Plans for the Future

Sir Ralph Richardson, Margaret Leighton, Mary Ellis and Anthony Quayle (Director of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre) are to lead the Stratford-upon-Avon company next season in a festival of five plays. Miss Ellis appears once only, and unexpectedly, as the Roman matron, Volumnia, in *Coriolanus* (March 13), with Mr. Quayle in the title-rôle. Sir Ralph is Macbeth (June 10), Prospero in a revival of Michael Benthall's production of *The Tempest* (March 25), and *Volpone* (July 15); Miss Leighton is Rosalind, Lady Macbeth, and Ariel; and Mr. Quayle will also play Mosca and Touchstone. He is not producing this year.

HIGH HOLIDAY

The Christmas plays are now well in hand. *Aladdin* opened at the Casino last night. To-morrow Dennis Arundell's production of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* begins at the St. James's for a limited season of four weeks; on Friday, *Peter Pan* (Joan Greenwood) opens at the Scala, and *Cinderella* at the Princes; *Humpty Dumpty* comes to the Palladium on Saturday; *Where the Rainbow Ends* to the Winter Garden, and *Let 's Make an Opera* to the Lyric, Hammersmith, on Christmas Eve; and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to the Old Vic on Boxing Day.

SIR BARRY'S THEATRE

Sir Barry Jackson's Birmingham Repertory Theatre, most famous in the country, needs in these days all the support it can get. Its spring programme, to the keen delight of collectors, will include Shakespeare's rarely-done *King Henry the Sixth, Part Three* (April 1), as well as *Sherlock Holmes*, *A Penny for a Song*, *Point of Departure* and *South Wind*. Douglas Seale produces the plays, each of which will run for a month.

MOVING HOUSE

There have seldom been so many "transferred" plays in the West End as at present. In spite of managerial fears of the transfer, all are successful: *The Hollow* (Ambassadors from Fortune), *And So To Bed* (Strand from New), *To Dorothy, A Son* (Garrick from Savoy), *The Biggest Thief in Town* (Fortune from Duchess), *The Lyric Revue* (Globe from Lyric, Hammersmith), Emlyn Williams's Dickens programme (Duchess from Criterion), and *Peep Show* (due at the Prince of Wales's after its good showing at the Palladium).

GETTING AROUND

The Original Ballet Russe, directed by George Kirsta, comes to the Royal Festival Hall on Boxing Day for a short season. . . . Helena Bliss has taken the place of Patricia Morison in *Kiss Me, Kate*, still running strongly at the Coliseum.

BOURNEMOUTH'S MAYORAL RECEPTION

A big reception was given in The Pavilion, Bournemouth, on Dec. 10 by the Mayor and Mayoress, Alderman and Mrs. Frank J. McInnes. Guests were received in the lounge ; there were excellent refreshments in the Popular Restaurant and in the Stage (Coach) Inn ; and in the ballroom they danced to the music of Haydn Powell and the Pavilion Dance Band, and of Alex Haddow and his music. To enliven proceedings, exhibitions of dancing were given in the ballroom.

Mr. R. Whitcombe, former Open Golf champion, and Mrs. Whitcombe, were received by Bournemouth's Mayor and Mayoress Alderman and Mrs. McInnes.

The Mayor and Mayoress received Captain A. O. Pollard, V.C., M.C., D.C.M., and Mrs. Pollard.

In the Lucullus Room at supper, l. to r., were : Lord Cranborne, M.P., Bournemouth's Mayor, Alderman Frank J. McInnes, and Mrs. McInnes.

At the Mayor's supper-party in the Lucullus Room were : *Left*, l. to r. : Lady Cobham, Captain A. O. Pollard, Mrs. Pollard and Sir Alan Cobham. *Right* : Mrs. A. C. Brown, Alderman A. H. Little, J.P. (ex-Mayor), Lady Godfrey, and Alderman H. C. Brown, another ex-Mayor.

In the Stage (Coach) Inn, guests were served by waitresses and footmen in Georgian costume. *Left* : L. to r. : Dr. E. Grant, Dr. D. M. Hare, Mrs. Hare and Mrs. Grant. *Right* : In the same venue Miss Sheila Cooke had a good helping from the chef.

In the Ballroom of the Pavilion guests danced the Palais Glide.

Into the ballroom went Mr. and Mrs. Graham Sharpe. He was formerly British and World Amateur Skating Champion.

Off to supper went, l. to r.: Mrs. G. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Groves (he 's conductor of the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra) and Mr. G. Miller, a well-known local journalist.

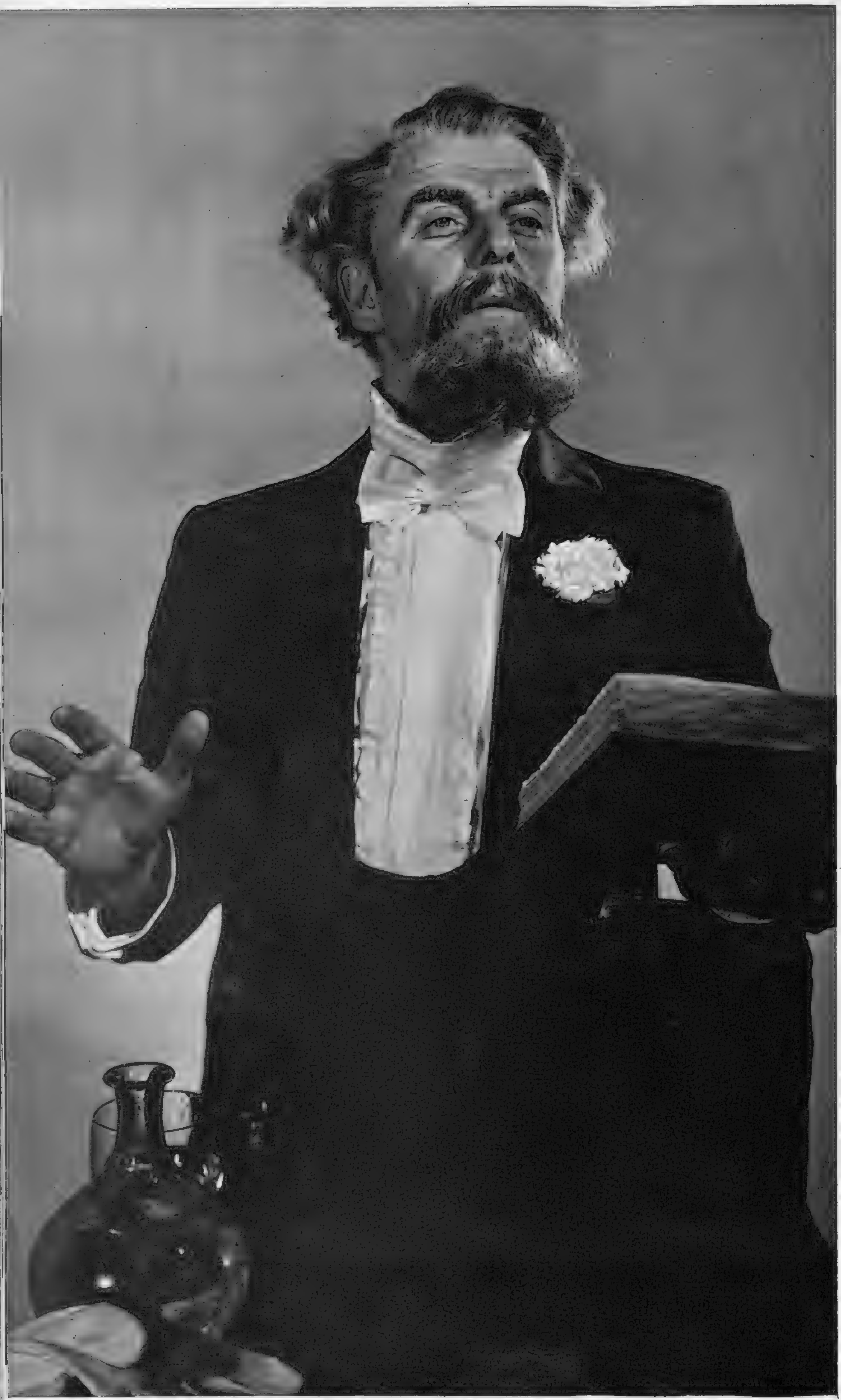
Close-up: Lord Cranborne chatted to the Mayor during the supper given in the Lucullus Room.

Cheery party at supper were, l. to r.: the Mayor of Christchurch, Mrs. Wallis Power, the Mayor of Poole, Miss M. Llewellin, and Lord Llewellin, P.C., of Upton.

In the ballroom: Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Pascall paused for a snapshot as they danced.

L. to r.: Miss E. Cartwright, Alderman Sir Charles Cartwright, and Miss W. Cartwright had a table of their own.

This long shot of the Stage (Coach) Inn during supper shows chefs at work on the well-spread side-tables.



WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO . . .

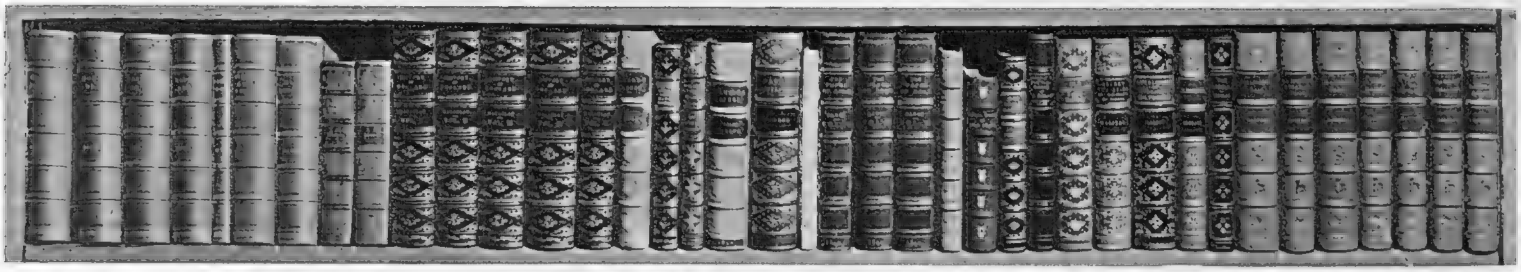
EMLYN WILLIAMS, alias Charles Dickens, for giving his services for a six-weeks one-man season as a personal donation to the Actors' Orphanage.

Looking quite remarkably like the well-known photographs of novelist Charles Dickens, Emlyn Williams first presented a group of well-chosen scenes from his books on the stage of the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith. His readings were so thrilling, his interpretation so excellent, that the one-man show moved to the Criterion, where it had equal success. And on December 11, Mr. Williams transferred his performance to the Duchess Theatre for a properly Christmassy six-weeks season, the profits from which will benefit the Actors' Orphanage.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Harold White.

CAST-MASTER

Reviving from the days of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, the fashion of casting from life, sculptor J. N. Schmitt chose poet-author-librettist Ronald Duncan as one of his first subjects. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, fashion demanded its renaissance, but as in the interim the custom had been confined to casting the newly-dead, the original technique had been forgotten, and a model had a most uncomfortable time. Recumbent, his face thickly coated first with oil, then with the plaster-milk, his closed eyes losing his individuality, he had straw nose-plugs to enable him to breathe. The cold plaster distorted the face, resulting in a rigid and taut facial expression. In Mr. Schmitt's studio under the "new" old method, the sitter can sit, stand, or assume any attitude he pleases. Breathing is normal; open eyes are easily cast. The result is excellent. Ronald Duncan is perhaps best known for his English adaptation of Cocteau's *Azrael—The Eagle Has Two Heads*, in 1946, and the same year, at Glyndebourne, his libretto for *Rape of Lucretia*, with music by Benjamin Britten.



OUR BOOKSHELF

MR. BELUNCLE. By V. S. Pritchett. (*Chatto and Windus ; 12s. 6d.*)

CANON JAMES. By Noel Blakiston. (*Chapman and Hall ; 10s. 6d.*)

SOME I KNEW WELL. By Clifford Bax. (*Phœnix House ; 15s.*)

A WORLD APART. By Gustav Herling. (*Heinemann ; 16s.*)

by RUPERT CROFT-COOKE

SLEEK and horribly self-satisfied, Mr. Beluncle, from the book of the same name, is a dreamer of smirking little dreams about the gaining of great possessions and importance, a chapel-goer and a bully to his family. His mother, who lives with him and has been fleeced by her son, is a shrill, deaf, nagging woman in dribbling second childhood. His wife is a squalid and sour creature, endlessly and vociferously pitying herself and running between hysterical extremes of emotion. Of his three sons, one is a spineless lout, without the courage either to follow or end his drooling love-affair, the second grovels at his father's feet and the third is a buffoon. Mr. Beluncle's partner is no more amiable and his associates among the congregation at the chapel of Mrs. Parkinson's Group are as smarmy, as malicious and as hateful as the Beluncles. When Mr. Pritchett has introduced us to these people, he is content to let each follow his own characteristic antics throughout a fairly long book in which nothing much happens, except that the characters become more and more odiously themselves, never quite repeating themselves in word or action, but going round on the squirrel's wheel of their own limitations. There is a cripple, for instance, who is semi-miraculously healed, not by her faith as a member of Mrs. Parkinson's Group, but by the murderous hatred she feels for a rival evangelist. There is the bankruptcy which hangs over Mr. Beluncle himself and drives him to ever more pretentious extravagance. There is his dream of "the good life," "the Kingdom," "fidelity"—to which is added, like a footnote, "Fidelity to Mrs. Truslove, of course." (Mrs. Truslove is his partner and mistress.) "He had never been tempted by infidelity to his wife ; she had no money."

It is, as may be imagined from these jottings, a story about people who are sickly in mind and body and live in an atmosphere of stuffy invidiousness. But the reader cannot comfortably dismiss it as a picture of surroundings fortunately unfamiliar to him, for disturbingly he finds that Mr. Beluncle is, in some distorted way, the father of all of us, and the whole book disparagingly, perhaps unfairly, but nevertheless with cruel cunning, gives a malicious picture of the life we all know. Instead of sublimating humanity for the purpose of art, Mr. Pritchett deforms and belittles it, but leaves it painfully recognisable. A clever, I think a diabolically clever book, written with icy and lucid irony.

ALSO deserving the somewhat ambiguous adjective "clever" is Mr. Blakiston, who can be as inexorable as Mr. Pritchett in his view of human motives in *Canon James*. He, too, is concerned largely with people of a certain creed, but instead of the jealous stringencies of a small dissenting sect, his characters, for the most part, belong to the Church of England. It is a long time since this background has been used with effect, but Mr. Blakiston knows it from matins to evensong, from vestry to church hall. His attitude is not satirical nor one of blind orthodoxy ; it is as though these brilliant short stories might have been concerned with any other background but, because he knows and likes this one, he chooses it for much of his most successful work. The title-piece, for instance, a tender study of innocence in the very young and very old, is a little masterpiece, and I particularly liked "Honest-to-God," about a decent parishioner who has to explain to his bewildered Vicar that though he feels that "church" is a part of his tradition, with his old school, his village, his regiment, England, the British Empire, yet he cannot conform to it for the awkward reason that he does not believe a word of the Creed. "'Oh, that doesn't matter,' Mr. Barlow was about to say, but checked himself." Altogether a rich collection which I for one am glad not to have missed.

MR. CLIFFORD BAX always writes well about the people he has known, so it is fortunate for us that he has known so many, and in such diversity. *Some I Knew Well* is a series of short studies, sometimes taken up with literary criticism rather than personal revelation, but leaving, in almost every case, new and clear-cut impressions of their subjects : James Agate who "combined something of Samuel Johnson's big-stickery with something of Samuel Pepys's pettiness" ; Stephen Phillips, that almost-forgotten poet-dramatist who was due in any case for a come-back ; Havelock Ellis in two rooms in Brixton, his mind and personality "like some magnificent cathedral" ; Gordon Bottomley, "a notable figure, a big and handsome fellow bearded like Jove" ; Aleister Crowley, of whom Mr. Bax says that we are mistaken if we think of him as a mountebank ; Arnold Bennett, W. H. Davies, George Russell with clear memories of previous incarnations ; C. B. Fry, "this heroic and almost legendary man" ; E. V. Lucas, whose interests included "club-life, literature, gardens, animals, cricket, food, wine and friendship" ; and a dozen other men. He remembers the author's cricket eleven of which Stacy Aumonier made a good short story and regrets that Galsworthy was prevented by an accident from playing for it. But the book is very much more than gossip and reminiscences, for Mr. Bax writes as shrewdly of the work of the men he describes as he does kindly of the men themselves.

TO the ever-growing and ever more terrible literature of the prison camp, the additions during this past year have not been notable for intrinsic merits, but Mr. Gustav Herling's *A World Apart*, translated by Joseph Marek, is the work of a born writer, who has the power to make real the hideous things he has witnessed and of a man of deep feeling and insight who has been able to understand the effects of political slavery on its victims. It is, therefore (though it seems unfeeling to use the word of such a book), interesting as well as harrowing. Measured in time as we know it, Mr. Herling's imprisonment was not for long—two years of gaol and labour camp—but it seems, as he recalls it, almost as interminable as he must have felt it to be. He believes the whole system of forced labour in Russia to be intended primarily not to punish the criminal but to exploit him economically and transform him psychologically. He traces this transformation as it is brought about by all the deadly means, the interrogations and hearings, the preliminary imprisonment, the camp itself. Torture, he says, is applied not on principle but as an auxiliary instrument. The system continues till it achieves the complete disintegration of the prisoner's individual personality, until the last thread has snapped and the wretch believes the words of the examining judge who told him that the iron broom of Soviet justice sweeps only rubbish into its camps. Far more grotesque and at the same time more moving than descriptions of merely physical brutality is this author's study of the deliberate destruction of the hearts and minds of men. Bertrand Russell says wisely in his Preface : "Although the effort is not easy, one should attempt, in reading such a book as this one, to understand the circumstances that turn men into fiends, and to realise that it is not by blind rage that such evils will be prevented." "I hope," he adds (and I hope with him), "that Mr. Herling's book will be very widely read."

SOLVING THE CHRISTMAS GIFT PROBLEM

IT is never easy to choose Christmas gifts and be sure that they are just the right thing for the friend for whom they were chosen.

There is, however, one gift which many of our readers have told us always brings letters of genuine gratitude, and that is a year's subscription to *The Sketch*. This is by no means only applicable to friends and relations abroad but to those at home in England. In both cases the regular delivery of *The Sketch* throughout the year keeps your friends in constant touch with all the interesting things that are happening in the Theatre, the Cinema, and the worlds of Art, Literature and Fashion. It keeps them in touch, too, with important social functions in various parts of the country, in some of which they will almost certainly have a personal interest, and in others of which they will renew the acquaintance of mutual friends. And we need hardly add that every time *The Sketch* is delivered to them they will be reminded of your happy Christmas thought.

Orders for subscriptions can be handed to any good-class newsagent or bookstall or sent direct to the Subscription Department, *The Sketch*, Ingram House, 195-198, Strand, London, W.C.2. The cost of the subscription, which includes the extra Christmas Number, and, of course, postage, is as follows :

For friends overseas : Canada, £2 19s. ; elsewhere abroad, £3. For friends at home : £3.

Mr. L. C. Judd, Mr. E. C. Padgett talked to the Master, Major C. S. Drabble, just as he was about to open a bottle.

From their table Mr. Claude Leach and Mrs. Corbett Thompson watched the dancing throng.

THE WHADDON CHASE HELD THEIR HUNT BALL

To the music of High Wycombe's Parade Orchestra, about 400 guests danced at the Whaddon Chase Hunt Ball on November 30. The *locale*: that handsome hostelry the Bull's Head at ancient Aylesbury, Bucks—handed over entire to the Hunt Committee by its proprietor for the evening. A most successful party resulted, and was immensely enjoyed by everyone. Mrs. L. S. Marler, of Wavendon Tower, near Bletchley, was the Hunt Ball Secretary.

Mr. Nubar Gulbenkian took the floor with Mrs. G. T. B. Clayton.

Lord Knutsford danced with Miss Rothschild.

Sitters-out were, l. to r.: the Hon. Mr. and Mrs. Money-Coutts, Miss Patricia Cruise, Major J. Goodally and Mr. Evan Cameron.

Miss Sally Fairfield danced a quickstep with Squadron Leader C. Rounding.

Conversational interlude at the bar: Mrs. R. Wright and Mr. Wilfred Shirley.

A toast all round by (l. to r.) Mrs. D. Mundin, Mrs. W. T. Barrett, Mrs. J. Isherwood, Mr. B. Isherwood, Mr. W. T. Barrett and Mr. J. Mundin.

MRS. PUTTS By PETER ENDER

★ AT THE CINEMA ★

with C. A. LEJEUNE

WHENEVER I learn that a film has been awarded a prize at one of those high-powered Continental festivals, I go to see it with the direst misgivings. Too often these misgivings turn out to be justified, but I am happy to report that this is not so in the case of *Miss Julie*, which jointly won the first prize at the 1951 Cannes Festival. This Swedish picture, adapted and directed from the Strindberg play by Alf Sjörberg, is a real beauty, and can be confidently recommended as one of the three best films in London: the others being, of course, our old friends *Edward and Caroline* and *La Ronde*.

The purists may object, of course, that Strindberg's dreadful, compact little play has been "opened out," and that much that was left to the imagination in the theatre is presented to the eye on the screen, but this is inevitable if the cinema medium (in this case one might properly be daring and call it art) is to be freely explored. And how wonderfully and stylishly Mr. Sjörberg has explored it!

Style—that rare, elusive, all-important thing, which stamps a work at one glance with character and makes it cohere—has been sadly missing in the cinema of late. Amongst English-speaking films it has come to be almost non-existent. You could count the directors with style on the fingers of one hand, and still be able to bite the thumb at you, and you, and you, sir. But *Miss Julie* is stylish from beginning to end. It is plainly the work of a man with an individual way of looking at things, and a special, personal talent for showing others what he sees. Mixing my metaphors wildly (for this rich picture conjures up an abundance of images), I would say that it is cut from whole cloth, it is all of a piece; it has its own viewpoint and its own peculiar idiom.

Mr. Sjörberg is a born visualiser, who has trained the hand to serve the eye, and although there is a certain amount of dialogue in his film, very tactfully translated into the minimum of English sub-titles, it is through his visual symbols that the tragedy is really brought out. A hand stretched to point toward a bell, which is still immobile but will presently ring, may be a presage of deep doom; the ooze of spilt wine from an overturned cask spreads significantly into the dark overflow of revellers into an empty square; the procession of lackeys across the front of the screen, each carrying a faintly smiling portrait of a family ancestor at the moment when the family manor is going up in flames, is a conception of impudence charged with the highest irony.

Sometimes it shows a larger talent in a director to accept a *cliché* (which is really little more than a swift and economical means of communication) than to reject it. *Miss Julie* is a tragedy of cause and effect; if you prefer it, of crime and punishment. It shows how a sensitive, proud and highly-sexed young woman, brought up in lonely grandeur, and trained by her mother to treat men as creatures rather lower than dogs and horses, may be ravished, physically and emotionally, by the first man who dares to dominate her, and can crumple up, in a single night, under the experienced hands of her father's servant. In order to understand the grown-up Julie, it is essential for us to understand the small girl Julie; in order to appreciate the exact mixture of confidence and servility in the valet Jean, we must have known Jean as a boy, daring, devious and disciplined, condemned from childhood to the prospects of a menial class, but calculated, from an early age, to the aping of his masters. In such a case it was the obvious course to use a flashback, and a flashback, or, rather, a series of flashbacks, has been used; but in employing this device, Mr. Sjörberg has never let the tempo of his picture flag, nor allowed the well-worn trick to seem derivative or commonplace.

The acting in *Miss Julie* is fine. A tempestuous little blonde, called Anita Björk, makes the heroine a creature of unpredicted pathos and tremendous fire. Ulf Palme, as the valet, acting under the difficulties of a make-up that emphasises the menial in every well-oiled strand of hair, manages to convey character that is always consistent and quite startlingly alive. The smaller parts are just right; the individuals are individuals, and the crowds are real crowds.

But the great miracle of *Miss Julie* lies in its relation of backgrounds to human figures. The screen has accustomed us to think of almost every modern picture as a drama (to use a euphemism) of men and women played against a vague backing of "locations" or studio sets. Nine out of ten English-speaking pictures seem to waste every portion of a screen that is not occupied by close-ups, medium shots, or two-shots, of the stars and supporting cast. But *Miss Julie* does nothing of the kind. It is a designed production, in which every detail of architecture, topiary and fabric has its bearing on the plot. Without her peculiar background, Miss Julie would not be Miss Julie; the cunning mixture of faded formality and the crude saturnalia of a mad midsummer feast provides this triumphant picture with just the atmosphere it needs. For all its grimness, it goes with terrific speed; a quality rare and very quickening in the cinema.

FROM all I hear, producer Samuel Goldwyn and all those associated with the fortunes of his films, regard *I Want You* as a successor to *The Best Years of Our Lives.* In this hope, I am afraid, they are deluded; the present film seems a successor only in the matter of chronology, not in any way that P. G. Wodehouse might describe as "of the essence."

The Best Years of Our Lives was a beautiful piece of craftsmanship designed to show, through the pattern of a single American family, how ordinary people came home after a war and tried to adjust themselves to peacetime conditions. It was a film of reorientation, to use the fashionable word, and so indeed is *I Want You*, but this time the orientation is definitely towards war; another war; a war against the East; and the patriotic duty of a call-up is promulgated through the instance of just such another American family.

I Want You, if I take its intention aright, is a calculated appeal to the youth and manhood of America to drop anything they may be doing and join the fighting forces. Purposeful, honest, sentimental, naïve, foreign, and at some moments embarrassingly hysterical, this scarcely seems to be a piece to recommend itself to an English audience, and unfortunately the standard of film-making is not in itself high enough to ensure regard on its own recognisances. There are a few good moments in the picture, especially when that beautiful but underrated actress, Dorothy Maguire, is about, but on the whole it seems a mistake, and at times (and this is horrible) almost a laughing-stock, to people who have been as close to war as we have.

The House in the Square is our old friend "Berkeley Square" brought up to date. Since it was produced by an American company in England, with the Hollywood stars Tyrone Power and Ann Blyth in the leading parts, few people will be surprised to find that the old gentle charm has been replaced by a new functional bustle. The man who goes back into the past now is a nuclear physicist, who has invited a nervous breakdown through working too long and too enthusiastically amongst his atoms. When, by a stroke of lightning, he is translated to the eighteenth century, he takes one look at it, elevates his nose, tosses off a few smart cracks to Dr. Johnson without waiting to hear what Dr. Johnson has to say to him, and buries himself in a cellar where he can rig up a primitive electric system of his own.

The original "Berkeley Square" was not a great play, but it was gracious, elegant and soothing, and it had a positive quality that sent the audience away, possibly beguiled, but believing in the endurance of true affection, and in good heart. *The House in the Square* is positive only in that it suggests that every age so far has been rather horrid, but that the age of Bow Street runners, Bedlam and undemocracy was even more horrid than that of the atom bomb. I can go with it to the point of agreeing that Tyrone Power and Ann Blyth seem very much happier in the atomic age than they do in the age of reason, but I still regret a lost, loved play, in which Leslie Howard once passed from one century to another with the ease of a city man popping across from his house to his club.

Photographed by Houston Rogers.

"THE DAY'S MISCHIEF". . .

. . . is Lesley Storm's new play at the Duke of York's: its plot, the disastrous "crush" of a young girl on a schoolmaster. *Above*, Muriel Pavlov as the schoolgirl; Walter Fitzgerald as her journalist father. The strong cast includes Ian Hunter, who plays the schoolmaster; Catherine Lacey as his wife; Beatrix Lehmann as an aunt whose bungling treatment of a delicate situation enhances the distress of those whose lives are involved in the tragedy of a young girl's first love. Norman Marshall produces.

THIRTEENTH CENTURY : Eleanor of Castile (1240-1290), wife of Edward I. and mother of the first Prince of Wales, has golden hair braided back. She wears a sky-blue cloak over a loose dress of white silk.

FOURTEENTH CENTURY : Anne of Bohemia (1367-1394), daughter of the Emperor Charles IV. and wife of Richard II. of England, wears the "surcoat," a garment copied from men and fashionable throughout the century. She holds her hair in a gold fretwork "crespine."

FIFTEENTH CENTURY : A French Lady-in-Waiting (1460-1480) in the charming but cumbersome steeple-hat. Sometimes a loop from the front of the hat is shown ; by inserting the finger in the loop, the weight of the hat could be eased for a few moments.

Fashions in Lilliput

"*It is as if Mrs. Lunn had persuaded all the most charming ladies of Lilliput to put on their gayest clothes and pay us a visit.*"—DAVID BAXENDALL, Director of the Manchester Art Gallery.

Certainly, seeing the Lilian Lunn exhibition of Costume Figures in Miniature, it soon becomes apparent that a New Look in dress is perpetually coming and going. Here at the S.T.A.R. Centre, 45, Park Lane, 150 little figures, all between 12 and 15 ins. high, are dressed in costumes dating from the thirteenth century to the present day.

There are mediæval damsels in top-heavy head-dresses, farthingaled Elizabethans, diaphanous ladies of the Regency, corseted Victorians and glamour girls straight out of Hollywood. Each one is perfect in every detail of dress. Their jewellery is in period, the flowers and gloves are correct in colour, the hats are altogether captivating, and waist-lines and hips have been carefully studied. It is, in fact, a record of women's shape through the ages.

Creator of these delightful little figurines is

NINETEENTH CENTURY : Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861), the raven-haired wife of Robert Browning, wears a brown wool dress, blue-knitted shawl and feathers in her bonnet.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY: Queen Elizabeth (1533-1603) in a splendid dress of black, white and silver—one of 3000 in her wardrobe. Her wig is a brilliant orange and tightly curled.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: Nell Gwynne (1650-1687), mistress of Charles II., has on a simple dress in green and brown wool. Her oranges are bright and shining and the figure is full of appeal and charm.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: The Duchess of Devonshire (1757-1806), a well-known figure modelled from the Gainsborough painting exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1778. It shows her in an overwhelming black velvet hat with towering feathers, blue ribbon and pink roses. Her wig is convincingly made of grey wool.

Mrs. Lilian Lunn

Mrs. Lilian Lunn, of Buxton. She has made altogether over 1200 since she started experimenting about six years ago, and her models have raised hundreds of pounds for charities. There are no men in the collection (Mr. Lunn thinks they would spoil it !).

She builds these figures without the aid of wire foundations, from strands of wool, cottons, velvet cords, chenilles and silver threads. Three weeks of loving toil with a crochet-hook and needle sees one figure complete—and some of the characters call for a great deal of research. The features are worked in the finest silks, each face is life-like, vivacious and individual. One is fascinated by her skilful needlecraft, for all of them have at least 15,000 stitches and some as many as 30,000.

Mrs. Lunn's little people make a brave, historical-fashion procession which must be seen to be really enjoyed. The exhibition remains open until January 5, before going to York, where it will be on show at the newly-opened Castle Museum.

TWENTIETH CENTURY: Princess Margaret is representative of our own times, in a dress designed by Norman Hartnell, which she wore as a bridesmaid at the wedding of her sister in 1947. In it there are 38,000 stitches.

The Wedding-and-Afterward Dress

By ELIZABETH PENROSE

A wedding dress which doesn't go into a trunk when the great day is over is one of Elsa Dunkerley's clever designs for Marshall and Snelgrove's model gown winter collection.

It is made in three pieces—the dress in white bengaline has a fitted bodice with a curling edge reminiscent of an arum lily; a generous skirt held out by the stiffest of tarlatan petticoats; and the taffeta-lined coat, intricately cut with a very new sleeve line and pretty face-framing collar.

Above you see the dress as it looks at the ceremony. The bride wears a tulle veil showering from a wreath of arum lilies, the coat held in place by the waistband of the dress. She probably wears too a cloud of Molyneux's soft zephyr "Magnificence" perfume.

Right: The dress as it looks at parties later on—the coat is worn as a coat, bits and bobs are accommodated in the pocket, the strapless dress really comes into its own. "Flair," Yardley's latest and worldliest perfume, surrounds her, and enormous French paste ear-rings jingle charmingly and disarmingly.

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THE WORLD OF MOTORING

POST-WAR BENEFITS

By William Hartley

I IMAGINE that the vast majority of the owners of pre-war cars have never even ridden in a post-war car, let alone driven one. Since they form at least three-quarters of the motorists in this country to-day, the great advances in car design and performance are an entirely unknown joy. If they once had the feel of one of the new cars, I think the more or less placid acceptance of the present situation would change into an angry uproar. Other factors enter into it, too. Not the least is road safety, for the post-war cars handle so much more easily and hold the road so much better. And petrol consumption overall is less, due to the improvement in efficiency of the new engines. This, I suppose, is adding fuel and draught to a smouldering fire.

Typical of this new motoring is a car I have just enjoyed for a while—the Triumph "Mayflower." This is one of the smaller cars which, under the old system, would have been rated at just under 10 h.p. It embodies many of the newer design trends, and the result is a car which feels and performs like a model of much greater size and power.

The body and chassis are built as a single unit, which gives strength and lightness. This lightness is important to speed, acceleration and fuel economy. There is, of course, independent front-wheel suspension: a post-war improvement of almost universal application which is perhaps the single item above all else that has made post-war motoring so different.

In the course of two longish runs, I drove the "Mayflower" under a variety of conditions with, I must say, considerable satisfaction. A fast run on dry roads from the Midlands to Surrey gave me the chance to see how well corners could be taken, and I was agreeably surprised to find that I could keep on the tail of a well-driven sports car. Since I was alone, and thus travelling light, the general performance was really first rate, but there seemed plenty of reserve power for greater loads. At times I rather missed a fourth gear, the gap between top and second being rather too great for me. While on the subject of gears, the gear-change proved to be one of the sweetest and easiest of the post-war boxes I have handled, and there was no snag about the operation of the steering-column-mounted gear-lever, which has troubled me on certain other machines. Petrol consumption was fully up to the makers' claim of 35 m.p.g.

On a cold day I used the heater, which is a standard extra. Efficient and pleasant it was, but this particular one struck me as noisy in operation and a bit annoying—but it can doubtless be improved. The two doors are sensibly hinged from the front and are wide enough to make for easy entrance. I am partial to front hinging of doors, and any woman would, I know, appreciate this feature. In so far as the body is concerned, it was pleasant, quiet and draughtproof. I see Triumphs have been to great pains to achieve this and to make the large boot dust- and water-tight.

Triumph "Mayflower."

The spare wheel is suspended on a cradle beneath the boot. It is simple to get the spare for use, letting it down by undoing a nut in the boot with the wheel-brace—this makes it thief-proof, too. The jack works easily and well, making a wheel-change quite a simple job. The snag comes when you try to put the punctured wheel into the spare position. It is quite a task to lift up the cradle and wheel to engage its hook, and some thought might well be given to this.

For a small car, the general roominess, ease of handling, pleasant steering and road-holding quality are very good. I was interested to see that, after another long run in very wet and dirty conditions, the car kept quite clean, and I suffered none of that annoying spray of road dirt on the windscreen. So the distinctive appearance and line seems to be efficient as well as stylish.

MANY motor manufacturers have made efforts to ensure that their agents and distributors have trained and skilled mechanics on their staff. This is a very important matter to the owners of the cars, in that good repair work, economically carried out, can only be done by trained men with special knowledge of the particular car. There are far too many poor mechanics who seem to have little idea of the work they have to do. Thus I welcome the fine new school that the Rootes Group have just opened at Coventry. The main course is one of three weeks, during which mechanics from garages all over the country will be taught all aspects of repair work on the Rootes models. The almost lavish equipment should do that well, and nothing has been left out which would help to increase knowledge and skill. The spare parts side is catered for to assist with good stocking and so forth.

Now the interesting thing to me was the proportion of men who failed the written and practical examination at the end of the course. No need to quote figures; but it confirms the need for such schools as this and how wise manufacturers would be to make them an integral part of their business. Of course, Rootes have had a school before, but not on this scale. And other makers operate similar schemes.

The point I make is that such schools help to improve the standard of skill in the garages we have to go to for our repair work. As owners, we should perhaps insist more than we do upon good and economical repair work. Here, anyway, is a positive step to improve matters.

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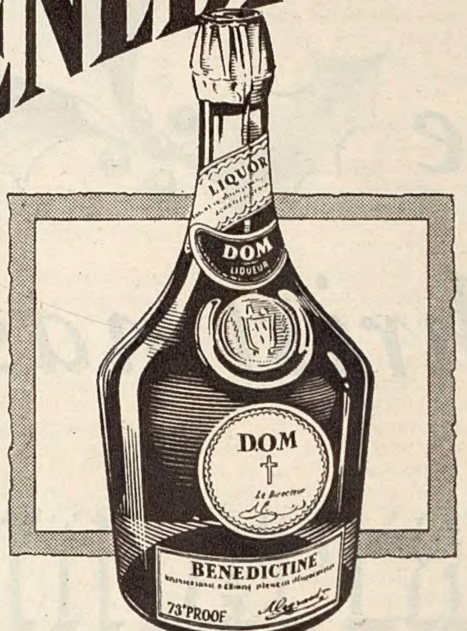

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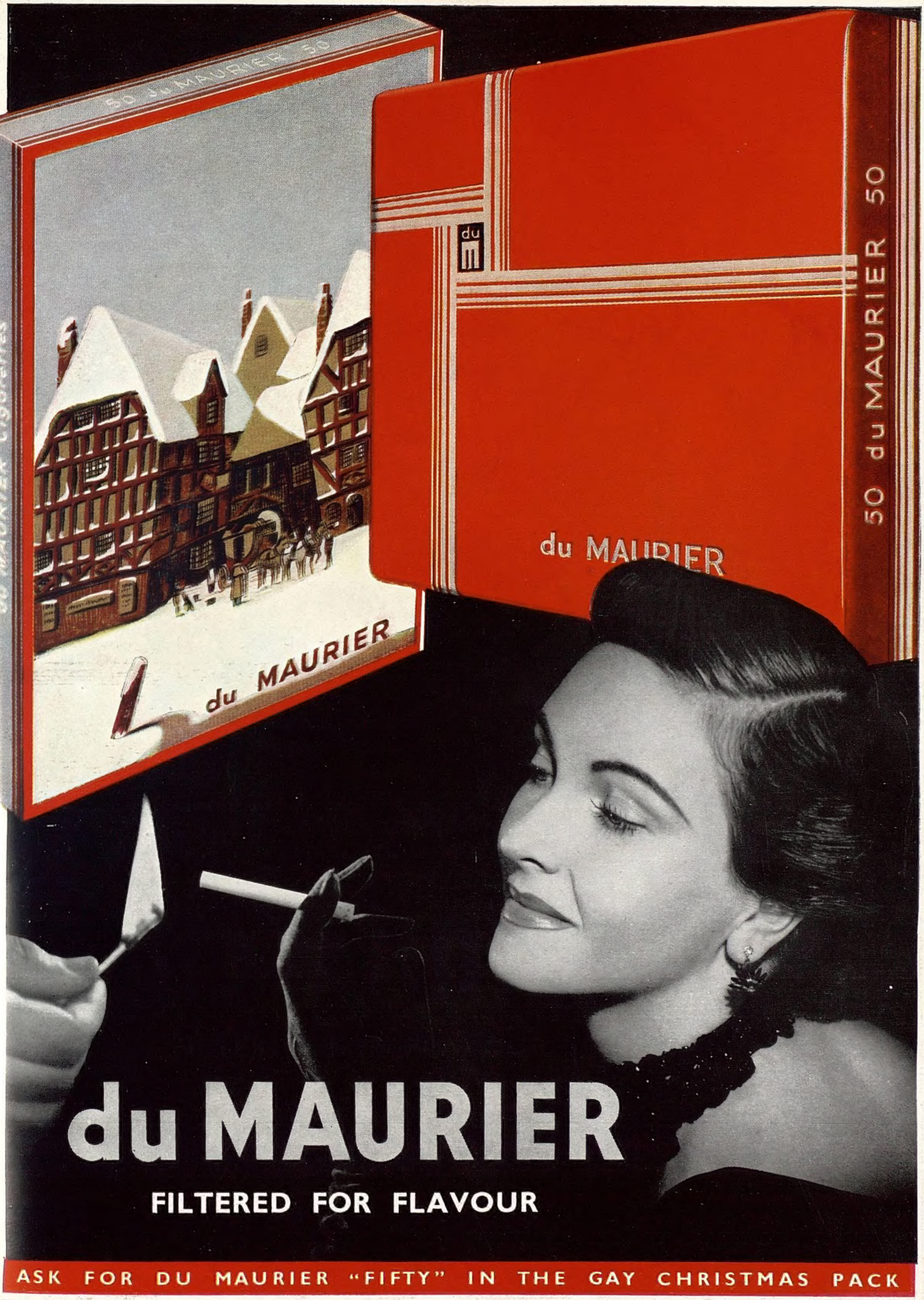

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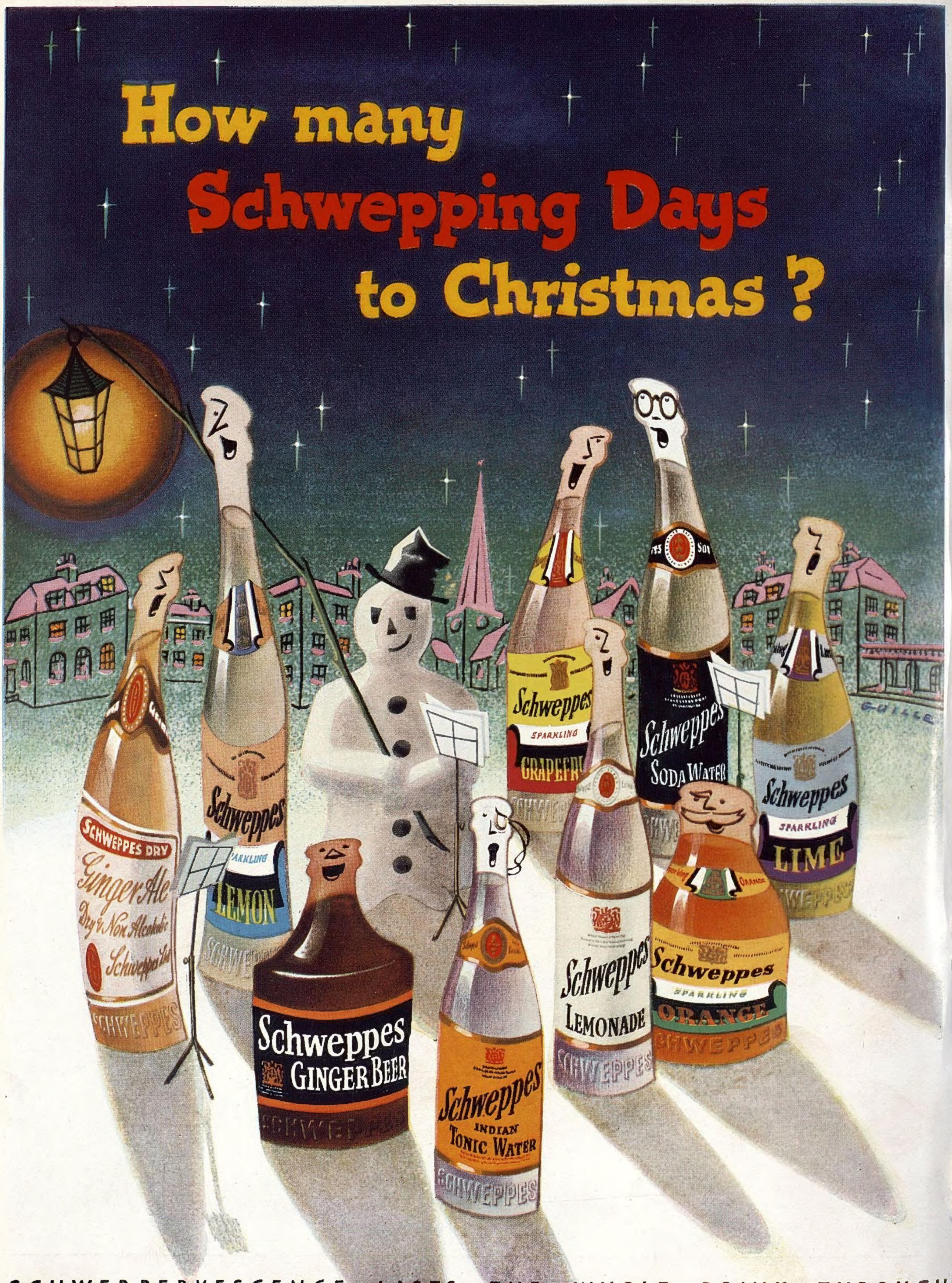

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